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LIFE

OF

VICE-ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE TRYON, K.C.B.

From a Drawing by C.W. Walton, made from a photo taken in 1891

LIFE

OF

VICE-ADMIRAL

SIR GEORGE TRYON, K.C.B.

B 3766

BY

REAR-ADMIRAL

C. C. PENROSE FITZGERALD

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PREFACE.

WHEN I undertook to write the life of Sir George Tryon I felt that I was undertaking a heavy responsibility; but I had such a high admiration for the man himself,—for his great abilities, his untiring industry, his absolute devotion to the service, and to all that concerned its honour and welfare, and for the splendid example he set by his kindly, judicious, but firm method of rule,—that I hoped to be able to give my readers a fair idea of his manly self-reliant character, and of his interesting and—up to the last day of his life—eminently successful career.

I have had great difficulty in procuring suitable materials for writing this book. One reason for this is no doubt attributable to the fact that the bulk of Sir George Tryon's records and journals went down with him in the Victoria.

Many friends, both naval and civilian, have

been most kind, and anxious to help me, but have been unable to do so from lack of materials, or other reasons; or have only been able to furnish me with the naked facts contained in a log-book or journal; and my imagination has unfortunately not been sufficiently fertile to enable me to clothe these records with interest enough to justify me in presenting them to the reader.

The following, however, have given me most hearty and most valuable assistance, and to them my warmest thanks are due.

First, I must thank Lady Tryon for placing all the family records at my disposal; for the very useful information she has given me on various points; and for the warm interest she has taken in the work.

Next, I desire to thank Sir Samuel Griffith, now Chief-Justice of Queensland, but Prime Minister of that colony at the time that Sir George Tryon was in command of the Australian station, and closely associated with him all through the negotiations which led up to the establishment of the auxiliary Australian squadron. The two were close and firm friends, and it will be seen how thoroughly Tryon appreciated, and how warmly he acknowledged, the zeal and perseverance with which Sir Samuel worked in this matter. A whole volume

might have been written upon this subject alone, and I have the materials at my disposal for doing so; but I felt that it would not be right to devote undue space to any one period of Sir George Tryon's life, however interesting it might be to a certain section of my readers. I have therefore refrained. But at the same time that I offer to Sir Samuel Griffith my most sincere thanks for all the trouble he has taken in answering my appeals to him for assistance, I must also tender him my apologies for having cut short this most interesting chapter.

To Mr R. G. Hayes of the Admiralty my warmest thanks are due for his most valuable assistance. His was the dry and laborious task of hunting up piles of Admiralty records, and fixing dates, and without his assistance I should have had no foundation to build on.

My brother officers who have helped me are too numerous to mention: most of their names appear in the text, and it would only be waste of space to recapitulate them here. I must, however, make two exceptions in favour of Mr C. J. Pawsey, Sir George Tryon's secretary, and Commander H. G. King Hall, D.S.O., who have given me most valuable and willing assistance. If I have forgotten any one else, I beg to offer them my

sincere apology in advance. The slight is not intentional.

My readers will doubtless understand the great difficulty of dealing with the closing scenes of Sir George Tryon's life, so soon after the tragedy which ended it, and whilst many of those connected with the event are still living. I hope, however, that I have on the whole succeeded in showing due regard to the feelings of the living, at the same time that I have done justice—though no more than strict justice—to the memory of the dead.

C. C. P. FITZGERALD.

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LIFE OF ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE TRYON.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

It is probable that the name of Sir George Tryon is known to many of his countrymen only as the man who was responsible for the loss of the Victoria. They know nothing of a singularly active and useful life, devoted to the profession which he loved, and to the highest interests of his country; and even that more restricted circle to whom his name was familiar during the various commands and important appointments which he held, will be apt to forget his many valuable services in the memory of the great catastrophe.

Various theories have been put forward to account for the hoisting of the signal which caused the disaster: they need not be discussed here, as the subject must be alluded to in the last chapter; but whatever speculations may be made as to what

might have been done by others to avoid a collision between the Victoria and the Camperdown after once the signal had been acknowledged, there can be no doubt that the signal was the primary cause of the accident: and we know that, with that honesty and generosity which characterised his whole life, Sir George Tryon with his last words took upon himself the sole responsibility. It was no more than those who knew him best would have expected from him.

It is scarcely consistent with that boasted British love of fair play, which we claim to be a specially national characteristic, that a man singularly gifted with all those qualities which inspire trust, devotion, admiration, and confidence in those who serve under him; a man who had devoted all the best years of his life, all his talents (and they were far above the average), to making himself a thorough master of his profession, and who, in the opinion of all competent authorities, had become such a master,—it is not fair play that this man should be judged by his countrymen in relation to only one act of his life; and that all the years of hard work and devotion which he dedicated to the best interests of his country, the ability which he exhibited as an organiser, the lessons which he taught as a strategist and tactician, the example which he set, and the confidence he inspired, as a bold, firm, skilful leader of fleets and squadrons, should be forgotten.

It is not claimed for Sir George Tryon that he

was a "great" man. The claim would be disallowed, and would be calculated to inspire ridicule; even as we have of late so frequently seen ridicule cast upon feats of good and hard service in our numerous little wars and encounters with savage enemies, in consequence of the subsequent writing of unduly inflated despatches, by men who did not happen to be gifted with a due sense of proportion and perspective, and who forgot for the moment that it is but one short step from the sublime to the ridiculous: and it would certainly approach the ridiculous to speak of any general or admiral as "great" unless they had led an army or a fleet into action against a worthy foe. Their business is fighting, and it matters not what genius for war they may be gifted with, what pains and trouble they may take to master not only the minor though essential details of their professions but also the great principles and science of the art of war, they cannot achieve "greatness" unless circumstances outside their own control afford them the opportunity for doing so. No such opportunity has been granted to any British admiral for many years; and it is probably the wish of all peace-loving Englishmen that no such opportunity should occur for many more years to come; and yet the ablest Minister that ever conducted the foreign affairs of the British empire can only control in a very limited degree the international feelings, sentiments, passions, jealousies, friendships, and supposed interests, which combine either to maintain

the peace of the civilised world or to render war inevitable.

England, however, expects, and always has expected, that when diplomacy has said its last word, and the pen has been laid down, the telegraph-office closed, and the sword drawn, admirals shall be found ready and able to lead her fleets and squadrons, not only with dash and courage, but with that cultivated skill (albeit without actual war practice) which may alone be expected to command success with the complicated machinery of modern naval warfare.

The most severe irresponsible critics of our present navy will not deny that it has made progress in certain directions since our last great naval war; and whilst they will probably join in the popular lament over the decline of old-fashioned seamanship, they will have to admit (if they know anything about it) that in matters of organisation, method, and general fighting efficiency, considerable progress has been made since the outbreak of the war generally known as the Crimean War; and this period indeed—viz., from 1854 to 1894—is, roughly speaking, that with which the present memoir proposes to deal. It is the period which covers the working life of Sir George Tryon.

The irresponsible critics above alluded to, who form a noisy, though small and unimportant, section of the community, would probably claim that any useful naval reforms which have been carried out during the period in question are mainly due to

their independent criticisms, and to the outside pressure of public opinion, and not to the spontaneous initiative of those within the machine. In making this claim the critics would be wrong; for although it may be true—indeed is true—that public opinion has more than once taken alarm at the political pranks which weak opportunist Ministers have played with the naval strength of the empire in order that they might frame economical Budgets, with a view to popularity and a desire to catch ignorant votes, and has forced both Conservative and Liberal Governments to ask for large additional sums for the strengthening of the navy: yet this phase of the subject is entirely distinct from the great, silent, unadvertised, often unnoticed, reforms which have been carried out in the various complicated branches of our navy; which reforms, often effected under great difficulties, and against persistent opposition, have enabled it to hold its ancient position amongst the navies of Europe. These reforms have been carried out by a few men of energy and action, with a talent for organisation; men who devoted their lives, and all the best gifts which Providence had bestowed upon them, to maintain the good name and to increase the efficiency of the profession which they loved, and of which they were proud; men whose energy was not spurred into action by any prospect of riches or commercial gains, and who were not uncommonly rewarded with small thanks and a tardily bestowed honour; men who felt that the great and glorious

traditions of the British navy were indeed a proud inheritance, but an inheritance which the heirs, could not enjoy in sloth and idleness; men who worked with an earnestness and singleness of mind which a great cause can alone inspire; men, in short, actuated by one simple idea—pride in their profession, and jealousy for its reputation and honour. These are the men who have been the true reformers of the navy during the period under discussion, and it is claimed that Sir George Tryon was a type of them, and that he was one of the most brilliant, most gifted, and most devoted of those whose joint work has not only maintained but greatly increased the efficiency of our navy, in spite of short-sighted political crazes for economy, and ignorant amateur criticisms.

No man could have inspired the confidence, devotion, respect, admiration, and it is not too much to say, love, which Sir George Tryon received from those who served under him without being worthy of it. With what implicit trust they would have followed him into action; feeling assured of his consummate skill as a tactician, his judgment, his nerve, his splendid self-confidence — an admirable quality in a leader,—these were the daily talk of the captains who served under his command.

Sir George Tryon was always preparing for war: it is not probable that he actually wished for war; he was of too humane a nature to indulge in such a wish; but he always had before him the possibility of its sudden outbreak, and he was deeply

impressed with the supreme importance of being ready for it whenever it should come.

He was not one of those who preach the pusillanimous and delusive doctrine that the greatest of all British interests is peace. He knew full well, and he acted on the knowledge, that the greatest of all British interests is the defence of the British empire, and the maintenance of its honour and integrity; and he knew that the turn of events, the jealousy excited by commercial rivalry, the clashing of interests in Europe, Asia, Africa, or even America, might any day make war, and not peace, the greatest of all British interests: war with all the resources of the empire, war to the last shilling and the last man who has the grit to fight. He fully realised this, and he was ever preparing for it; ever working out problems in strategy and tactics; ever drilling and organising the forces under his command; sparing no pains or trouble to keep the ships of his squadron and the officers and men who manned them in the highest state of efficiency and ready for the supreme test of war; deeply conscious as he was of the terrible consequences which must ensue if Great Britain is found to be wanting in organised naval strength when next she is called upon to fight with another great maritime Power, or possibly a combination of them. His capacity for work was marvellous — he never seemed to be tired; but whatever he was doing he was always ready for a discussion on naval tactics, and during his last

command in the Mediterranean (the period during which the present writer knew him best) he was in the habit of inviting these discussions. He had strong convictions of his own on certain points, yet he liked to hear both sides of a question; and although he was not fond of acknowledging himself wrong, it must be admitted that it was not often he had occasion to do so.

During this last command it was the custom—whenever possible—after a day at steam tactics, for all the captains to go on board the flagship to discuss the manœuvres. Perfect freedom of discussion was permitted, and all were invited to express their opinions and to make suggestions.

Not uncommonly it occurred that one of the captains, or perhaps several of them, would come on board boiling over with indignation at an imaginary wrong, where the admiral had called them to order and corrected them when they were doing that which was perfectly right; but after full explanations on both sides, it almost invariably happened that these same captains had to acknowledge that they were wrong and the admiral right; so that latterly even the hardiest and most ambitious were somewhat shy of arguing with a man whom they had by that time come to regard as a master of the art.

Sir George Tryon was a man of tall stature and of a commanding presence; latterly he was also broad and stout—in fact a portly figure: but it

was significantly remarked of him that his heart was big enough for his body.

Some thought his manners brusque; some said they were imperious; but none ever denied the kindness of his heart, or his great generosity, in the most universal and best sense of the word.

It was frequently said of him that "he never jumped on a man when he was down." This may appear a trite remark, and it may be said that nobody but a brute ever does jump on a man when he is down; but the saying has a deeper meaning to the minds of those who use it: it not only means that he never broke a bruised reed, but it means that he was always ready to hold out a helping hand to any one in trouble, difficulty, or distress: or as Charles Kingsley picturesquely expresses it—"to help a lame dog over a stile."

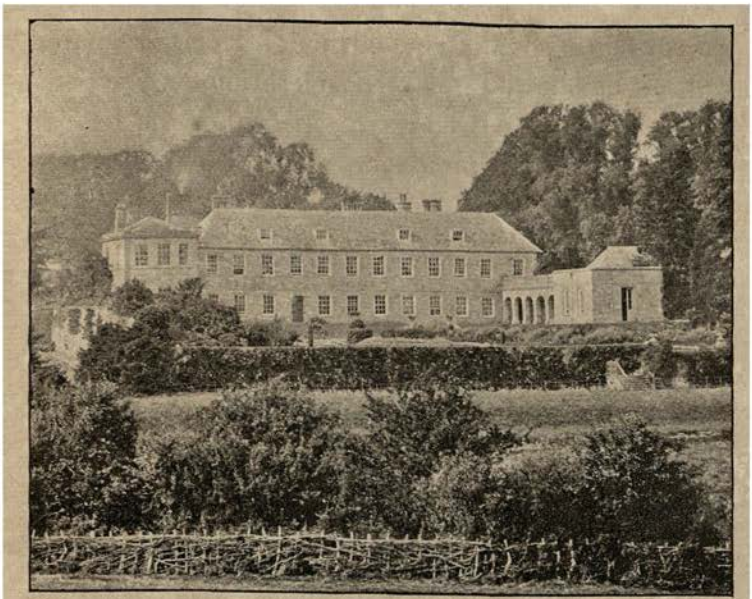
In an obituary notice of Sir George Tryon published by the Royal Geographical Society—of which he was a fellow—the following passage occurs: "When a very distinguished officer recently had an accident with his ship, he entered Sir George Tryon's room, for his first interview afterwards, in fear and trembling. When he came out he was heard to say, 'One would have thought that it was the Admiral who was in trouble, and not me.'"

There was generally a merry twinkle in Tryon's eye, and he was very fond of a joke, but he never allowed his love of fun to interfere with the strict performance of his duty. He was of a restless and

energetic disposition, but although he never spared himself he showed great consideration for the comfort of others. He had a high ideal of the honour and dignity of his profession, and in his hands these were safe.

He was undoubtedly ambitious, with the worthy ambition of genius: he knew he was clever—most clever men do—and he was not only content, but proud, to devote his talents entirely to the development, the organisation, and the improvement of every detail of his beloved profession. He never allowed the least competition between private interests and "the service," and he did not understand how any officer could do so.

With these qualities it is not surprising that he was regarded as the *beau idéal* of an admiral by those who had the good fortune to serve with him. By his contemporaries he was almost universally beloved, and he was "dear old George" to them; and if perhaps his brilliant qualities, and the devotion with which he was generally regarded, excited in the breasts of any of them some faint twinges of jealousy, it was but the usual tribute which mediocrity pays to exceptional ability.



Bulwick Park.

CHAPTER II.

BIRTH—FAMILY—EARLY LIFE.

GEORGE TRYON was born at Bulwick Park, Northamptonshire, on January 4, 1832. He was the third son of Thomas Tryon, Esq. of Bulwick Park, by his wife Anne, who was the daughter of Sir John Trollope, Bart.

Thomas Tryon had four sons. The eldest—Thomas—fought at the Alma in the 7th Royal Fusiliers, a regiment whose deeds at that famous battle have been immortalised by Kinglake.

Thomas also fought with his regiment at Inkerman, and then served with it through the Indian Mutiny. He retired as a lieut.-colonel, and succeeded his father in 1872. He died in 1888.

The second son—Henry—was educated at Sandhurst, and joined the Rifle Brigade. He fought at Alma, Inkerman, and Balaklava, and was killed on November 20, 1854, while in command of 200 riflemen leading a gallant attack on some Russian rifle-pits. It is certain that had he lived he would have been recommended for the Victoria Cross.

The third son—George—is the subject of these memoirs.

The fourth son — Richard — was educated at Harrow, and served in the Rifle Brigade from 1854 to 1867. He is still alive, 1897, the sole survivor of his family.

George Tryon showed early signs of being a remarkably clever and intelligent boy. There is extant a journal of his: it consists of only half-a-dozen pages, written in a childish but very neat hand. It is dated July 1840, at which time George was only eight and a half years old; and it appears from the little diary that he accompanied his father and mother on a trip to Scotland, *vid* Birmingham and Liverpool: and he describes in his own language the journey and the different things he saw. It would do credit to a child of twelve or fourteen years old.

George went to a preparatory school, and thence to Eton.

It does not appear very clear whether or not he was intended for the navy at the time he went to Eton. The assumption is that his parents did not contemplate a sea-life for him at that time, as he eventually joined the navy two or three years older than the usual age; and indeed it is a tradition in the family that he suddenly informed his father of his wish to go to sea, while at Eton. Be that as it may, he went to sea at the very mature age of sixteen: and those who were messmates with him as a midshipman are of opinion that he was none the worse for being kept at school a year or two longer than usual; but that, on the contrary, his later entry, and public school training, gave him a greater breadth of view, and made him a quicker and readier learner, than many of his contemporaries, who had joined the navy some years younger. On the other hand, however, this may have been due to natural causes—viz., to his greater ability and intelligence. But as this question of the best age for the entry of naval officers is one of such acute controversy amongst those most competent to form a judgment, it need not be discussed here.

It is certain that George went to sea of his own choice; and his father having obtained a nomination for him, he passed the necessary examination—not a very stiff one in those days—and joined the Wellesley in the early spring of 1848.

The Wellesley was fitting out at Plymouth as flagship for the North American station. Her captain was George Goldsmith, and the Admiral was

the Earl of Dundonald (Lord Cochrane of Basque Roads renown). The ship sailed for her station on the 25th of March 1848 to relieve the Vindictive, carrying the flag of Admiral Sir F. Austen.

George Tryon gave early promise of being an excellent and interesting correspondent, and his letters to his mother give graphic descriptions of the places he visited and of his early experiences of sea-life. But though letters from a midshipman to his mother are doubtless of absorbing interest to her for whom they are intended, and possibly also to the other members of the family, it would not be interesting to the general reader to give more than a few extracts from them.

The Wellesley was a sailing two-decker; for although there were numerous steamers in the navy in 1848, they were mostly of small size, and steam had not yet been tried in line-of-battle ships, though ten years later (after the Russian war had come and gone) there was scarcely a line-of-battle ship in the navy which was not a steamer. So rapid was the transition, greatly hastened, no doubt, by the war. It is no wonder, therefore, that in 1848 all our best officers looked upon seamanship—the art of handling ships of all classes under sail in all weathers—as the *ne plus ultra* of a naval officer's ambition. To say that a man was "a good seaman" was quite the highest compliment you could pay him—in fact, it embodied *almost* everything which went to make up a perfect naval officer. Things have

altered considerably since 1848; but even now, in the year 1897, it is not yet fully recognised that seamanship of the old type is an obsolete and unnecessary art. So hard do old traditions die—traditions of the most glorious epoch of the British navy.

Young Tryon set himself to work assiduously at the task of learning seamanship and navigation, and there can be no doubt that he succeeded.

Whatever else he learnt at Eton, it is clear that his mathematics were greatly neglected; and as mathematics—of at least an elementary type—are a necessary foundation for navigation, he found that he had to begin almost from the very beginning.

He writes to his mother: "Only fancy, I have to pay my own schoolmaster £5 per annum. But if no one else does, I shall get my shilling's worth out of him, as he will have to teach me from almost the beginning—instead of which most cadets know," &c., &c. He was evidently a quick learner, and fully realised the importance of making up for lost time in his mathematical studies; for at an examination held on board the Wellesley when he had been a year and a half in the ship, he heads the list, the subjects being algebra, trigonometry, navigation, and nautical astronomy, and the result as follows:—

	Marks.		Marks.
Tryon . . .	814	C—— . . .	130
S—— . . .	698	W—— . . .	111
C—— . . .	205	D—— . . .	85
H—— . . .	201	L—— . . .	47

He started late, but he certainly made up for lost time.

The passage of the Wellesley to Bermuda was a long one, even for those days. She sailed on the 25th March, called at Fayal for a few hours without anchoring, and arrived at Bermuda on the 3d of May. They had gales, of course, and George was sea-sick, but tells his mother that "the best thing to do when you are sea-sick is to eat plenty and walk about." Excellent advice! Then they have great smashing of crockery in the gunroom (the midshipmen's mess-place). It is well known that the gunroom crockery always does get smashed in much greater proportion than either the captain's or the wardroom crockery; but then, on the other hand, they make up for it in live stock: for there is a tradition—and a very true one—that the gunroom fowls never die. It is supposed that the midshipman of the watch takes such good care of them that in the morning after a gale of wind, although numerous dead fowls may be found in the captain's and the wardroom hen-coops, there is never a dead one found in the gunroom hen-coop. Fowls are all more or less of the same pattern, but the crockery is not; and so it comes about that the gunroom usually gets a great deal of its crockery broken in the early part of a commission, and then the middies have to eat their dinners off broken plates, and drink their tea out of cups without handles, and suffer various other hardships, which fit them for a sea-life.

It appears from his early letters that young Tryon was a supernumerary on board the Wellesley, and consequently liable to be drafted into any ship on the station in want of a midshipman; and his special anxiety seemed to be lest he might have the ill luck to be drafted into the Imaum, to await disposal on the West Indian division of the station. The Imaum was an old yellow hulk that used to lie in Port Royal harbour at that time, and for many years after, as a receiving ship. She was popularly supposed (not quite without justification) to be a hotbed of yellow fever; and in any case she was a most undesirable ship for a young and zealous midshipman to pass any of his time on board of. The captain and officers of the Wellesley, however, seem to have taken a fancy to Tryon, and he was saved from going to the Imaum.

It is not proposed to follow closely, and in detail, the career of young Tryon through the junior ranks of his profession; for although he was at this time preparing himself—by his zeal and diligence—to become the very able and accomplished officer which he subsequently so amply proved himself to be, yet the ordinary everyday events of a midshipman's life—save when recorded by the magic pen of a Marryat — would scarcely be of much interest. It may, however, be permitted to take an occasional glimpse at his doings; not only to see what manner of lad he was, but also to give the reader some idea of naval life nearly half a

century ago. For although it may be assumed that many of our readers are familiar with the life of Lord Dundonald (the admiral with whom Tryon was serving)—'The Autobiography of a Seaman'—they will doubtless remember that this most interesting book deals with an earlier period,—forms, in fact, a connecting-link between what we might call the Nelsonian era and the steam era, which latter was in its childhood—though vigorous and ambitious childhood—in 1848. The youth and development of this steam era corresponds with the period of Tryon's naval life—1848 to the present day.

Tryon writes to his mother with great joy to tell her how he was saved from the Imaum. Writing on May 30, 1848, he says: "I have some good news with which to begin my letter to you. I am sure of remaining in the Wellesley. I asked Lieutenant Cochrane to speak to the Admiral about it, which he did; but there was some difficulty, as I knew there would be, owing to there being no vacancy in this ship; but it has been overcome, and I—still having the Imaum for my ship—am permanently lent to the Wellesley. Lieutenant Cochrane was very good-natured about it," &c.

Lieutenant Cochrane, who was a son of Lord Dundonald, appears to have been most kind to young Tryon on many occasions: he allowed him the use of his cabin, and befriended him in many ways; and Tryon was most grateful, and was continually telling his mother of all the kindness that Mr Cochrane had been showing him.

In those benighted and ignorant days, before it was discovered that one boy was as good as another, it was no uncommon thing for a lieutenant to take under his wing a promising and intelligent midshipman; to work him up in professional subjects; to take a special interest in his progress; to allow him the use of his cabin for working or reading in; and to be to him what was then known as his "sea-daddy." This of course was gross favouritism, quite shocking to all principles of impartiality and equality; and instead of this all midshipmen are now made by machinery, on the same pattern, like strings of macaroni. But still it is found most difficult to make them all quite alike: some curl one way, and some curl the other; some curl up directly they are out of the mould, and some curl down; so that even the most scientific modern machinery fails to make them exactly alike.

In the days when favouritism was recognised, and not considered wicked, Mrs Tryon must have been pleased to hear that her son George had been taken up by one of the lieutenants—and the fact that the lieutenant was a son of the admiral would not be likely to detract from her satisfaction; for women—and especially mothers—are never such prigs about impartiality as men, certainly not when their own children are concerned. But it was not only Lieutenant Cochrane who took up young Tryon; the captain and commander took him up too, and he was very soon given charge of a boat. A proud moment that, when first a cadet or mid-

shipman gets "a command of his own," even if it be but a jolly-boat or a dinghy. Was there ever an admiral in the British navy who could forget the sensation of importance and the pride with which his bosom swelled as he clambered down the ship's side, stepped into his jolly-boat for the first time (in command), and gave the order to "shove off"?

The Wellesley stayed at Bermuda for about two months—from the beginning of May to the end of June—and then went to Halifax. From Bermuda George writes to his mother most picturesque descriptions of the famous caves, and how they had a picnic there, and lit up the caves with torches and blue-lights; and how beautiful the stalactites were, and the marvellous clearness of the water. And even at this early age he seems to have had an appreciative eye for the beautiful and picturesque, not usual in a lad of his age. He certainly did not learn drawing before he went to sea, as some of his earlier attempts at sketches of the places he visited are of the crudest and most childlike description. But the improvement is very rapid; he must have worked diligently, and must also have been possessed of some natural talent for art, as some of his later logs—that of the Vengeance, for instance—are adorned with some very creditable and by no means inartistic sketches; and his plans, charts, and mechanical drawings are marvels of neatness and accuracy. He wrote a very neat, finished, and legible hand at this time, and did so for many years afterwards; though later in life it

degenerated into too much of a runaway hand, and became somewhat illegible.

From Bermuda the Wellesley went to Halifax at the beginning of July, and stayed there till the end of November. Halifax seems to have been rather a wild place in 1848; for George writes to say, "The other day another of our men was murdered here, beaten with sticks to death. So our men when on leave attacked the house he was found in, beat all the occupants, and burned it to the ground. It consisted of two houses, built of brick, nearly the only ones in the town, and it was rented for £25 for each house. It was a house into which they enticed men, and then robbed them, making them drunk, &c. In this house some soldiers were found dead, and their comrades in revenge have burnt it down several times."

Even if young Tryon did not learn much at Eton, —in the general acceptation of the word learning, —he certainly did not regret having spent some of his time there; for he says, in a letter: "I have never yet regretted, except the expense of going to Eton; it is a letter of introduction of the best kind all over the world. I meet some one wherever I go. There never was such a nice place as it, and there never will be."

George is described at this time as being a tall lanky lad, nearly six feet high; full of spirits, and fond of a lark. He gives his mother an account of a shooting expedition at Halifax: "I went out shooting early one morning to a wood, where there were

the day before a great many woodcocks, about twelve miles from Halifax. Our horse bolted two or three times on the passage out there, but with no serious consequences; and we had a hard day's work, during which time I saw only two things to shoot at, a hare, and a robin (a large bird something like a missel-thrush), both of which I killed. The woodcock had all gone into the depths of the forest, as they always do after rain, it having rained the night previous to our excursion. In the evening driving home I was voted to be helmsman, so I took the reins and drove safely home about half the distance, though our nag showed a great disposition to go in any way but the right one, and at last off he bolted, and I only managed to stop him after he had gone about three-quarters of a mile along anything but a nice road: then I walked him, or tried to walk him, the rest of the way, and he went quiet enough till he got to the top of a very steep hill, at the bottom of which is the ferry, where small steamers convey you to the Halifax side of the harbour, and he walked about 50 yards down the hill, when the harness gave way, and he set off as hard as he could, and nothing would stop him down the hill, and nothing could prevent it. I saw our only choice was to get a good ducking by going slap over the ferry, or to go into a boarded paling; so I chose the latter, and picked out a soft place between two posts, and he went full gallop into it, the shafts making two bull's-eyes through the palings; the horse was thrown down of course, and my companion was pitched out, but I

kept my seat. Well, we got over that all right, and led the horse into the steamer, and got over the other side, and I led him about 250 yards from the landing-place, when at the suggestion of my companion I let him go, when up he reared, and knocked me down, but I scrambled on all-fours out of his way and escaped comparatively uninjured, and jumped up and saw my friend run full dash into an apple-cart, the contents of which the little boys devoured rapidly: the horse cleared this, and then fouled a truck, when one shaft was broken; again he cleared, and about 200 yards further on (my friend still retaining his honourable but onerous position) fouled a 'go-cart,'—as they are called,—which men trundle along the street with meat, &c.; which the horse leapt, or tried to leap, and from the concussion my friend was seen to fly clean over the horse's head. I thought he must have been killed; but no, no damage done as yet. I set off running to pick up the guns, and just came in time to see a fellow running off with mine, to whom I gave chase, and, thanks to my long legs, tripped him up, and secured my property, but, sad to say, with the stock broken. I put my gun into a shop, and ran after my friend, whom I had left sitting in the middle of the street, rubbing himself after his fall, and picked up his gun also, and lodged it in safe hands, and pursued the fugitive horse, and after running at full speed for about half a mile saw the seat of the chaise,—or waggon as they are called here,—and put it on the side of the street; and then about

200 yards further on found the body with the two hind wheels, and took the cushions, &c., out of it, and put them into a shop, and then looked for the missing fore-wheels and shafts, and found them about a quarter of a mile further on, and then went to the man to tell him about his loss. Of course we were not liable for damages, though he wanted to get them. But after about an hour's consultation I proved that we had taken every precaution, and that the horse had run away with us, which by the law out here—and I believe also at home—exempts from any liability as to damage."

Oh those joyous midshipman days, when you could tumble about without hurting yourself; when salt horse was as tender as spring chicken; and when everything was "a lark," except having your leave stopped!

In spite of his love of fun, young Tryon knew how to work hard at his profession, and could exercise the invaluable quality of self-denial when necessary, as witness the following case. It appears that some of the officers of the Wellesley had planned a tour in the United States, and had invited Tryon to accompany them. It seems that he at first thought he could go; but then writes to his mother to say, "I am sure I shall disappoint you in saying that I do not think I can go this year, for various reasons undermentioned, and I am sure you will say I am right in the end. First, I have a boat, and shall have plenty to do as to duty. It is a cutter, which is seldom given to a cadet. Secondly, I must this

summer study hard with the naval instructor. . . . I could not think of going as long as I have a boat, particularly a cutter, which is seldom given to a cadet, particularly to the junior cadet in the ship; and therefore if I was to go away I should decidedly forfeit my claim in some measure to her, &c., &c. The money you sent me will keep: it won't melt: and the clothes will keep also. Though I cannot boast of being 6 ft. 3 in., I can of 6 ft. I often laugh when I look at the captain and think of what Batten said, 'Not every naval cadet can go on board for the first time and report himself in his captain's breeches'—which, if you remember, was the case; and, what is more, they have worn better than any others I have."

The reward for his self-denial (not in wearing the captain's breeches, but in foregoing the pleasure of a trip to the United States) came next year; and in the summer of 1850 he went with a party of his shipmates for a tour in the States, visiting Boston, New York, Washington, Philadelphia, Niagara, &c.: and writes to his mother most interesting descriptions of all the places he visited, and of the novel sights he saw. At Washington they went to the House of Representatives. "We first went into the strangers' gallery, afterwards we were introduced to the floors of the House; we went on to the floor, and were introduced to all the leading statesmen." He then gives a description of them, and of the scene in the House during a debate. Not too flattering; but then he was young and critical, and perhaps pre-

judiced also, and did not understand the methods and manners of the land of freedom.

In the light of subsequent events it is curious to read his remarks; for even then (1850) the storm was brewing that burst eleven years later, in the great patriotic struggle for Unionism, which our cousins—with the true genius of their race—recognised as the primary condition of a great, free, and independent nation.

"The debate," he says, "was most interesting. It was concerning the admission of California, which State wishes to be admitted as a free state, not as a slave state. The Northern States, who have no slaves, have no need for them, and are for the abolition of slavery. The Southern men, again, are all for slavery; for they would be ruined if slavery was abolished. . . . The Northerners preach about the horrors of slavery, &c., &c.—in fact have quite the same opinion as Englishmen; for they can afford to be magnanimous at the expense of their neighbours. . . . It is a very difficult question to settle, especially as the Southern States say they will separate themselves from the Union if slavery is abolished, and there is little doubt but that they will."

In this letter he also describes the constitution of the House of Representatives and of the Senate; and adds as a *P.S.*, "I forgot to mention one other difference between the Senate and the House of Representatives; in the latter they blackguard each other in the highest terms, and in the former they are at all events tolerably civil to each other."

This remark savours of insular prejudice; but it must be remembered that in 1850 our own House of Commons had not yet advanced to that freedom and richness of language in debate which the eloquent Irish patriots have since introduced.

As a *P.P.S.* to the above letter (written from Washington) he adds: "One thing remarkable is that there are no beggars; we have not seen one, and only heard two organs. There are no lean horses, and no starving dogs, and the Irishmen seem well contented."

George Tryon was always a bit of a wag; but yet it must be regarded as a pure accident that he groups the Irishmen with the lean horses and the starving dogs, and brings them in last.

As a set-off against his criticisms of the parliamentary manners of the House of Representatives, it must be mentioned that he speaks in the warmest terms of the genuine thoughtful hospitality with which he and his companions were treated during their tour in the United States. He says: "You have no idea how civil every one is as soon as they find out who you are—that you are an Englishman—and you have only to inform any one of that, and he will give you the best information in his power regarding the place. One gentleman we met, and asking him a question, he saw who we were, and he offered his services, and he accompanied us all over the town."

It is one of the standing reproaches of "the old country" that the great personal attention, and in-

dividual hospitality, with which our cousins receive us in America, are not reciprocated with anything like the same warmth on this side of the water. It is difficult to say why it is so; but it is a fact which hundreds will bear witness to, and it is a very natural cause of soreness.

It is to be feared that this same want of sympathy, and lack of reciprocal hospitality, occur also with regard to our own colonies; just because, forsooth, our ultra-critical taste detects in our colonial brethren some want of that refinement and polish which young communities, occupied with the tougher and rougher business of subduing nature, and extending the bounds of our empire, have not been able to find much time to cultivate.

During the three years of the Wellesley's commission as flagship on the North American station, she visited almost all the places of interest, both in the West Indian and Canadian divisions of the station; and young Tryon with his eyes wide open takes in and appreciates all he sees. They went to Trinidad and saw the famous pitch lakes. They visited nearly all the Windward Islands, and Jamaica, and St Thomas. The scenery enchants him; and his descriptions of all the beautiful things he saw—the cabbage-palms, the flowers, the shrubs, the gorgeous-plumaged birds—remind one of Kingsley's 'At Last.'

Then they go round the Canadian division of the station, and visit St John's, Newfoundland, Louisberg, Sydney, St George's Bay, and the Straits of

Belle Isle, where they get some wonderful trout-fishing. George says: "And now I think I shall beat any one at fishing, after this place, as to numbers and size. We went trout-fishing, and caught in about three hours more trout than we could carry. We each loaded one or two men, and carried several dozen ourselves, and still left hundreds rotting on the shore, not being able to carry them. The average size was $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb., a great many were $3\frac{1}{2}$, and several $4\frac{1}{2}$, and one $5\frac{1}{4}$ lb. We left off from sheer satiety, having caught fish until we were sick of it." Almost too much of a good thing, even for an enthusiastic fisherman; for after all is said and done about big baskets of fish, the joy of the true fisherman depends not on the weight of fish caught, but on the difficulty in catching them. Hence two or three good fish caught in a clear chalk stream in Hampshire afford better sport than two or three score caught in a Labrador river, where they are very numerous, hungry, and unsophisticated, and require no skill in the catching.

At the period of our naval history of which we are writing, and for some years afterwards, the admiral commanding on the North American station flew his flag in a sailing line-of-battle ship, and was always accompanied at sea by a paddle-wheel steamer, which towed the flagship during calms and light head-winds; and which in turn was towed by her during fresh and fair winds, so as to save her coal. The steamer would also tow the flagship in and out of harbour when

there was not a commanding breeze. Thus the Admiral had many of the advantages of being in a steamship, without the smoke and dirt and the noise and vibration of the screw. It must have been the height of luxury. But the more general introduction of steam, and the conversion of nearly all our line-of-battle ships into steamers during the period of the Russian war, abolished this happy and comfortable method of procedure. The sailing line-of-battle ship was succeeded by the steam line-of-battle ship, and this again by the ironclad in 1867.

The Wellesley's commission of somewhat over three years must have been a very pleasant introduction to a naval career. It showed the sunny side of a profession, which also has a dark side; as many a youngster could testify who has spent the first three years of his naval life in a brig on the West Coast of Africa, or some other small craft on a distant station—the Pacific, for instance—where the long sea cruises and the many months of salt beef and salt pork often weed out the soft and delicate ones.

The Wellesley came home, and paid off at Chatham in June 1851; and George Tryon, after the usual spell of leave, was appointed to the Vengeance, Captain Lord Edward Russell, which was then fitting out at Portsmouth for the Mediterranean station. The Vengeance was a fine 84-gun ship. She was considered a crack ship, and a first-rate sailer, even as late as 1851; though, strange to say,

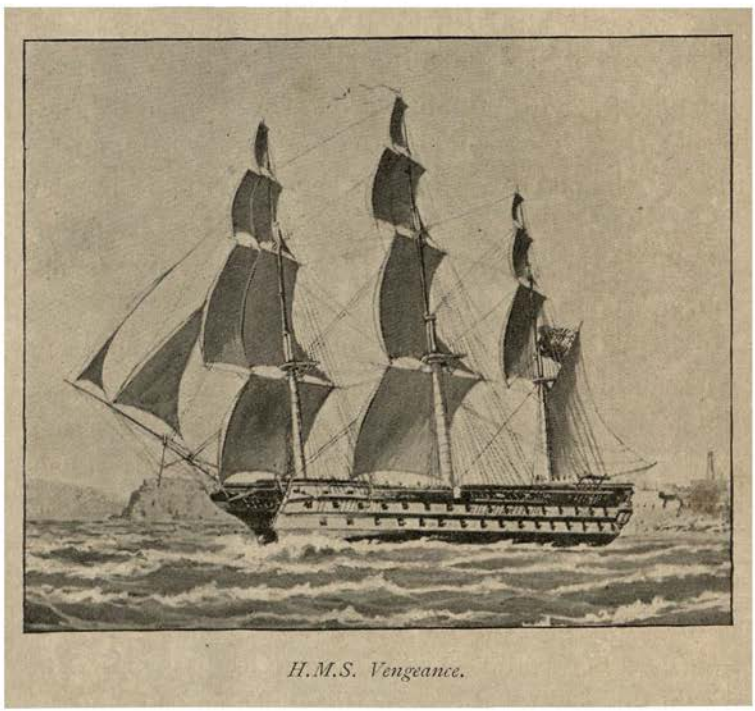
she was built after the model of a ship captured at the battle of the Nile in 1798. That marvellous old ship, called by the French the Franklin and renamed by us the Canopus, appears to have afforded the model for British naval architects for full fifty years. It is a tradition that the Canopus was all her life the fastest sailing line-of-battle ship in the British navy; and that not even the attempted copies of her which we produced for half a century could ever beat the old ship herself, though they were nearly always good sailers. Proud indeed may the French feel of their genius for naval architecture.

The Vengeance was one of these copies, and was known in the Mediterranean as "the wind's-eye liner." She could beat all the line-of-battle ships, and all the frigates, with the single exception of the Phaeton.

It is almost impossible for the present generation to understand the extraordinary pride which both officers and men took in a ship that was a good sailer, and could beat the other ships of the squadron. That, and drill aloft, were the two things that they lived for, and thought of, and talked of, and dreamt of. Every one in the ship, from the captain down to the cook's mate, felt himself at least an inch taller when he met the men of another ship which his ship had beaten, either at sailing or at drill aloft; and the midshipmen, we may be sure, were not behindhand in appreciating and reflecting the glory

of the situation. Young Tryon — as his letters show—was very proud of his ship.

The Vengeance sailed for the Mediterranean in August 1851 ; called off Lisbon and Gibraltar ; and arrived at Malta on October 2.



H.M.S. Vengeance.

It has already been remarked that a record of the daily life of a midshipman on board his ship would not be a very interesting subject ; and young Tryon appears to have been quite aware of this fact, for even when writing to his mother he devotes almost all his space to accounts and descriptions of his doings, and of the interesting places he saw, and people he met, during his visits to the shore. But

it must not be inferred from this that these visits were anything more than the rare exceptions to the somewhat monotonous routine of daily life on board a man-of-war in the piping times of peace. But peace or war (and he got a taste of the latter a year or two later), he was ever full of zeal and energy; most anxious to learn his duties and to become a credit to the profession which he had chosen.

The commander of the Vengeance in 1851 and 1852 was William R. Mends, one of the organisers of the present British navy, a very distinguished officer, and still alive (1897), as Admiral Sir William Mends, G.C.B. He says of Tryon: "He served with me, when I was commander of the Vengeance, for two years, as a midshipman, and a better young officer never existed; ever full of energy and zeal. As a boat midshipman and signal midshipman he was unrivalled. On my becoming flag-captain to the late Admiral Lord Lyons, I applied, with his permission, for Tryon's appointment as one of the lieutenants of the Royal Albert, and as such he more than fulfilled the opinions I had formed of him in the junior ranks." Sir William then goes on to describe Tryon's special services at the time the Royal Albert had to be stranded on the island of Zea to save her from foundering; but we must not anticipate.

The Vengeance went to Alexandria shortly after her arrival in the Mediterranean, and young Tryon —whose parents appear to have been very generous

in supplying him with money to visit places of interest — managed to make a delightful trip to Cairo under exceptionally favourable circumstances.

He writes to his mother: "You will doubtless be somewhat astonished at my dating my letter from Cairo, but I have been here nearly ten days on a cruise. I got leave with a party to come up here and see the wonders, shortly after our arrival at Alexandria. . . . We started up the Nile in a steamer for this place, at the Pasha's expense, who has at this moment a great respect for English officers. We had ten days' leave, but towards the termination of it, when we were thinking of returning, we all went to pay our respects to the Pasha, who held a levee on purpose, and after smoking long, beautifully inlaid, studded-with-diamond pipes, and drinking coffee, he invited us to dinner, and the consul said it was impossible to decline, so he took upon himself the responsibility and told us we must remain, and immediately afterwards we heard by telegraph that the Vengeance had put to sea, as it had come on to blow; and the next thing we heard was that the captain was coming up; so we waited his arrival; and he was very glad we stopped." Which was lucky for them. Then he describes an interview, at which he was present, between Lord Edward Russell (the captain of the Vengeance) and the Pasha, concerning the construction of a railway from Alexandria to Cairo,— a project which was opposed by the Sultan, as suzerain of Egypt, but

which it appears Lord Edward had authority from the British Government to press upon the Pasha, even at the risk of displeasing his lord and master. For England was at that time very anxious to put her overland route to India on a better footing. And then we hear the complaint (not for the first or the last time) that France is doing all in her power to frustrate England in Egypt; and doubtless a similar complaint from France — though it does not come so freely to our ears—that England is doing all in her power to supplant France, and frustrate *her* projects. Our mutual bickerings are not altogether of recent date. Possibly they act as a useful safety-valve for letting off superfluous steam, and thus prevent serious explosions. At any rate no explosions came at this time, and three years later the two rivals were fighting side by side, as close allies, in the Crimea.

In the same letter, quoted above, the Pasha and his dinner are described: "I shall now attempt to describe the dinner with the Pasha. He—to begin with his person—is very fat, very gross and coarse, but he is very kind in his manner to us, and tries to be very amiable; but I am not sure whether he succeeded or not, but his manner was curious, from his habits, no doubt. He sat cross-legged during the interviews and when not at dinner. And now for the dinner. We first had a sort of semi-cold soup, the chief ingredient of which seemed to be eggs; next a dish of cutlets, then apricot tartlets, then stewed mutton, then

cold potatoes in oil, and so on, with cod-fish, and French beans, and rice patties, &c. He let us off with eighteen dishes, which are all handed round separately, and of each of which one is obliged to partake. . . . I have been twice to the Pyramids; the first time with a private party, and the second time in state with Captain G——. They are only nine miles from this, but it is a long day's work to go there and back in one day. We started early, at half-past four, on some of the Pasha's horses, for he mounts us whenever we send for horses. Sometimes we order fourteen, at any time we like. And after crossing two ferries, &c." And then the glories of the Pyramids, the Sphinx, and the tombs are fully and graphically described: though described naturally and unaffectedly, without any rhapsodies, or any of the other numerous adornments which so many people think it necessary to add to the description of one of the most intrinsically interesting spots on the face of the earth.

Then there was a second expedition to the Pyramids, this time in great state: "The next time I went it was a very grand affair. We had a steamer on purpose, and carriages to take us to it, and we rode on excellent horses with magnificent saddle-cloths all embroidered with gold, &c., and fifteen armed attendants; and on our arrival we found the Pasha had ordered tents to be pitched, and five camel-loads of provisions for five of us; for on this occasion there were only five of us. . . . Fancy how kind the Pasha has been to us; he paid our passage up, and has mounted us many days,

and he gave a dinner for us, and has given us everything, and has offered to pay the bills at the hotel, but the captain declined that; but it has been quite as expensive, for we have been obliged to fee all his men so highly. Even the sentry at the palace gate, when we wanted to see it, asked for backsheesh. . . . The captain and the consul told us that it would not do under the present circumstances to decline the Pasha's hospitality—in fact, we have been on a diplomatic expedition, very interesting, and I never have enjoyed myself more." Whether the expedition was diplomatic or private, it is very clear that Tryon and his companions had what the Yankees call "a good time" at Cairo, and made the most of their opportunities. Tryon on his return to his ship adorned his log with some capital sketches taken at Cairo and Alexandria; but concerning which he is very modest, and tells his mother, "I attempted a few sketches, but all I can say is that no one would ever doubt that they are original."

The Vengeance cruised about to various ports in the Mediterranean, and amongst other places visited Gibraltar; where six of her midshipmen, including Tryon, went hunting with the Calpe hounds:—

"On Monday last we got leave—six midshipmen, including myself—to go out hunting. We began by landing in a pouring rain, blowing half a gale, at half-past five in the morning. . . . After searching the town till about half-past eight we managed to collect horses enough. . . . The meet was about six miles off; the field mustered

about forty, with six red-coats. We soon found in a large gorse cover, and after some preliminary skirmishing round and round the base of a hill for about half an hour, we got away. Our captain was out, and some of us nearly knocked him over down a ravine. We had a run of an hour and a half over some very pretty country through a cork-wood, and at last ran him to ground" (probably the fox, not the captain) "under a rock on a very steep hill. I was close to the hounds the whole day, and the six midshipmen—every one said—rode with amazing success, considering the precipices. The captain says he did not follow, as he considered the country dangerous; and I must say I should not have pushed on so much if I had not been on a very low horse, though strong, and he ran up and down almost perpendicular places like a cat. We left off—what they called—twenty-five miles from home, but I should think eighteen or so, and after giving our horses half an hour's rest, we, whenever the ground admitted of it, raced home. I am sure English horses would not have stood it." Probably not: but a British midshipman on a foreign hack has always been famous for feats of horsemanship.

The Vengeance came home to England in 1852, arriving at Spithead on Christmas Day. She then went to Plymouth and refitted there: and on April 10, 1853, she sailed again for the Mediterranean. Affairs in the East were at that time beginning to look interesting, if not critical; and in June the British Mediterranean Squadron moved up to Bashika Bay.

While in England the Vengeance changed her commander.[1] Commander Mends was promoted, and Commander George Le Geyt Bowyear took his place. He also is still alive (1897) as a retired admiral; and on being asked by the present writer for his recollections of the Vengeance and George Tryon, he wrote as follows :—

"The Vengeance, 84, Captain Lord Edward Russell, was detached from the Mediterranean station towards the end of 1852, and wintered in England. I joined her at Devonport in January 1853 as commander. . . . I found a promising set of young fellows in the gunroom. George Tryon was about the senior mid unpassed, as he certainly was the biggest. I fancy he came to sea rather later than usual, and attained his height early. He was signal officer. The right man in the right place, as I shall soon show. The ship was ready for sea at the end of the spring, and it was intended to send her to Lisbon; but affairs in the East changed everything, and she was ordered off sharp to Malta, to rejoin Admiral Dundas's fleet, and arrived at Valetta early in June, making the tenth line-of-battle ship there. This was an essentially exercising fleet, and the benefit of a good signal officer was immense. George Tryon had a sharp eye and a quick intelligence to put things together.

[1] For the information of our non-naval reader it may be here explained that the commander is not the officer in command of the ship. In a large ship the commander is the officer second in command; and in all ships, irrespective of size, and irrespective of the substantive rank of the officer in command, he is always called "the Captain."

"In harbour Admiral Dundas had a fixed day for exercise, which he always attended himself. The Vengeance had always been about the foremost ship at all evolutions; and the Admiral got furious when the flagship was beaten, and the commander got it hot, and consequently adopted all manner of devices to try and ensure success."

Admiral Bowyear then describes some of these devices; but the description would scarcely be intelligible to any but naval readers, and *they* will be quite capable of imagining them for themselves without any description, as it is not improbable that they may have seen them practised—in fact, not absolutely impossible that they may have practised them themselves, or at any rate winked at them, in their own ships.

But all the dodges of the flagship were unavailing, so far as the Vengeance was concerned, for the ever-watchful eye of the signal midshipman and his myrmidons was upon her. And if by night she tried any devices, it was still the same; for if it was too dark to see from his own ship, Tryon used to drop down quietly in the dinghy, or a shore-boat, and lying unsuspected abreast of the erring flagship, his quick eyes and ears would soon detect what preparations she was making for the morrow's drill, and back he would come to the Vengeance and give to his commander such valuable information that the latter was enabled to start on equal terms at the keenly contested exercise of the following morning. No wonder Commander Bowyear appreciated his signal mid.

But the signal midshipman was soon to have some more stirring and exciting work than watching the flagship in Malta harbour; for the drama of the Crimean war was about to be acted, and Tryon was soon to watch the battles of the Alma and Inkerman from the maintop of the Vengeance, and to see some active service in the trenches himself.

The British fleet remained at Bashika Bay (close outside the entrance to the Dardanelles) from June till October; and then passed up through the Sea of Marmora to Constantinople, and moored in Beikos Bay in the Bosphorus. It would be entirely outside the scope of this biography to follow or to discuss the different phases of the political events which led to the British and French fleets entering the Dardanelles, and finally the Black Sea, and the subsequent invasion of the Crimea. These are to be found in Kinglake's 'Invasion of the Crimea,' and other works on the same subject; and we are only concerned with the fortunes of the Vengeance and George Tryon,—though the fortunes of Tryon and his two soldier brothers were profoundly affected by the course of events which led to the war: and the gallant young Henry there ended his short but brilliant career, meeting a soldier's death at the head of his men of the Rifle Brigade.

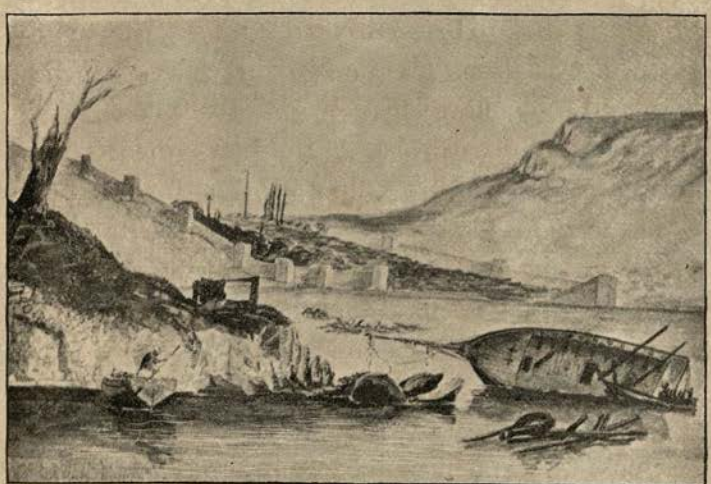
On November 30, 1853, occurred the naval battle of Sinope. The Allies (English, French, and Turks) call it a massacre. The Russians call it the destruction of a Turkish squadron which refused to surrender to a greatly superior force, war being imminent.

Such acts of hostility have very frequently preceded war between civilised nations. Whether they are morally justifiable or not, is a question which need not be discussed here; yet those who have done likewise, need not call them by hard names. Our "glorious victory" at Copenhagen in 1801 may possibly have presented a different aspect—from a Danish point of view.

It appears that a Turkish squadron, consisting of seven frigates, three corvettes, and two smaller vessels, was lying at anchor in Sinope Bay, a bay on the southern shore of the Black Sea, nearly opposite to Sebastopol. A Russian squadron, consisting of six sail of the line (three of them being three-deckers), two frigates, and three steamers, surprised the Turks at anchor,—getting close up to them in a fog before they were seen,—and the Russian admiral—Nachimoff—called upon them to surrender. The Turks refused, and the Russians then destroyed all the ships with the exception of one steamer, which escaped, and brought the news to Constantinople: she had been riddled with shot, and had seven men killed and many wounded. When the captain of this steamer reported himself to the Grand Vizier, the latter, it is said, spit in his face.

There can be no doubt that the Turks fought with the greatest bravery, and gained for themselves the admiration and sympathy of all Europe. The Turkish frigates either sank, blew up, or were driven on shore with their colours flying, and were afterwards burnt by the Russians; so that the whole squadron was destroyed, with the single

exception above mentioned. The loss of life on the part of the Turks was said to have been very great, nearly 3000; but they would not surrender, and the Russians cannot be blamed for making their victory complete, and rendering it impossible for any of the ships to be used against them again. It is probable that any French or English admiral would under similar circumstances have acted exactly as did



Sinope.

From a drawing on the spot by George Tryon.

Admiral Nachimoff. At any rate, the Russians were very proud of him, and have lately called a ship after him. They also have a first-class battleship named Sinope: so it is very evident they are not ashamed of it.

The Russian fleet then returned to Sebastopol.

Early in January 1854 the British squadron went to Sinope, viewed the site of the so-called massacre,

and the remains of some of the Turkish ships, and then returned to Beikos Bay.

Tryon probably reflected the general British naval feeling on the subject of Sinope when he wrote home to say, "We are all so annoyed about it. With our large fleets we might sweep the seas; and these poor Turks, left so imprudently so far from aid, and so totally unable to cope with the Russians alone, might have been saved. . . . It is impossible not to admire the cool determined courage which made them fight at all against such a fleet. . . . If we had been sent out when the Admiral first wished it, we probably might have been in the action: as it is now, we appear to be neither at peace nor war, and no prospect of a settlement, and so many people to consult."

Then, not long afterwards came war; Great Britain, France, and Turkey against Russia.

The fleets of the Allies moved up into the Black Sea; the troops were landed at Varna, and then re-embarked for the Crimea. The Vengeance was in the thick of it, and Tryon was very busy:—

"We have lots to do of course. All boats away from 3.30 A.M. to 7.30 P.M.; and working parties, and all sorts of little extra work: but it is interesting, and the men like work, and are never better than when hard at it, particularly when there is any novelty connected with it. . . . I should think, now that the Russians are retreating, the fleet will leave, as their presence can no longer be required to cover operations on this coast. . . . The great nuisance is, that the Russians by raising

the siege of Silistria have let out 'our own correspondent'—the man who used to abuse our Admiral so——who, now his tongue has been quieted so long, no doubt will come out with renewed vigour. . . . The Admiral was here [Varna] yesterday evening on a flying visit to Lord Raglan. We go to sea next week, if not before, but everything is kept very secret, and nothing is known whatever as to our destination. . . . Tom" (his brother in the 7th Fusiliers) "has passed for his company, as he says 'first rate'; some one above him did not, so it is quite possible that he may get his company at once, a great thing for him. He is very much sunburnt, but I never saw him looking so well."

The following is a short itinerary of the movements of the Vengeance in the spring and summer of 1854. After visiting Sinope in January she returned to Beikos Bay in the Bosphorus. Then leaving Beikos Bay on March 24, arrived off Varna on the 26th, Odessa, April 20. The bombardment of Odessa took place on April 22. Then the Vengeance cruised off Sebastopol during the latter part of April and the early part of May; then Baljik Bay and Varna; then off Sebastopol again in July; then back to Baljik Bay. Then took place the transportation of the army across the Black Sea to the Crimea; and the Vengeance arrived off Old Fort on September 12. Battle of the Alma on September 20. The fleet then moved down to a position six miles north of Sebastopol; and the naval bombardment of Sebastopol took place on the 17th of October.

In August of this year (1854) occurred that sudden and extraordinary outbreak of cholera in the French and English fleets, which puzzled everybody. Writing to his mother, Tryon describes it thus: "You will perceive we have returned to Baljik after our cruise. We fortunately seem to have started in the nick of time: the rest of the fleet, except one or two steamers which remained here to attend to the transports, joined us at sea very shortly after we had left them; and just as we were getting better it broke out dreadfully on board the flagship [Britannia]. Forty died in one night, and twenty the day afterwards; and then it gradually decreased till now: she has lost 140 out of 950, and hardly a man escaped diarrhœa. Our sick list in a few days went from 25 to 137. Strange to say, the officers of the fleet have almost entirely escaped. . . . The French have lost many more than us. It is very curious to trace the ships that have suffered. The French on the right of their flagship and immediately adjacent to her have suffered most. Then our own flagship and the Furious steamer in a line with her. Then Albion, which was next to the flagship, and has lost about 70. Then ourselves with 18. We fortunately got to sea, and probably escaped the noxious air to some extent. Then a jump, and at the extreme of the line the Trafalgar loses 135. Some ships escaped almost entirely, and some have not had a case."

Tryon, as signal midshipman, watched the battle of the Alma from the maintop of the Vengeance;

and thus describes it, when writing home three days afterwards:—

"On the 19th the army in full fig advanced (the fleets accompanying) and slept that night three miles from the Russians, stationed on the heights on the south bank of the river Alma, with seventy or eighty guns in position. We all anchored close to the shore in full view of everything. The next day at about eleven the army was seen to advance; the French and Turks, close to the shore, climbed up a very steep road, which the Russians were unable to prevent, as our guns would have knocked them over. The French rushed up most gallantly; the artillery had a tremendous drag to get up at all; twice we saw the French shelter under the brow of the hill, making a short retreat from the murderous fire, while their forces were increasing: when collected they rushed on, carrying everything before them.

"Now for our part of the field. Our men advanced, first coming to a village in flames, filled with sharpshooters, who were driven out by the Rifles, and were assailed by a storm of shot, shell, and grape. Now they came to a brook about 300 yards from the main Russian battery: it had very steep banks, and part of the men were up to their armpits; but nothing stopped them. They shoved each other up the opposite bank, and rushed on right in the face of a battery of twenty-four guns. Took it, guns and all, killing or driving out of the redoubt all the Russians, when some one hailed, 'You are firing on the French.' A bugler heard it,

sounded cease firing, which was repeated down the line and obeyed" (these details must, of course, have been heard after the battle, not seen from the Vengeance). "The 23d leapt out of the battery; the Russians rallied, returned, retook their guns, and carried them off. In a few minutes the mistake was found out, but too late to save the lives of hundreds of brave men, who, huddled together, afforded a fearful opportunity to the Russians to pour in a murderous fire. It was now the colonel and Radcliffe (a brother of the one who was in the ship, and eldest son of the Radcliffe papa met) fell; but our own men rushed on again as soon as the mistake was found out, captured two guns, and routed the Russians, who, like a flock of goats, now fled towards Sebastopol. . . . I went on shore to help to carry the wounded down, and to see if I could find my brothers. I found that Tom had gone to Scutari, and that Henry was here. I did not see him, but saw an officer who had just seen him, and he is quite well: his battalion was not much under fire; it was the other one which led, and, strange to say, suffered far less than the regiments which followed. We are now weighing anchor for Sebastopol. To-night we shall anchor within a few miles of it, and the army will halt until we get the siege-train landed."

The sequel to the battle of the Alma, the divided councils, and the hesitation to advance and capture Sebastopol by a *coup de main* before the Russians had time to recover themselves, are well known, and need not be repeated here.

Tryon was at this time an acting mate, and was twenty-two years of age. He passed his seamanship examination on the 17th of March 1854; and as he was born in January 1832, he must, for a few days, have been a midshipman of twenty-two. Rather old, according to present ideas, though nothing extraordinary at that time; for in the same year (1854) the present writer was messmates with a naval cadet of twenty-seven years of age, who weighed 18 stone, and could not pass for a midshipman; he was not allowed to go aloft for fear of breaking down the ratlins. He retired in the following year; but this is a digression.

Tryon had not lost a day's time; but there was no royal road then to becoming a mate with anything less than six years' service. He was very anxious about his examination. "Not" (as he tells his mother) "that I am afraid of being plucked, but of getting an inferior certificate, and the seamanship examination is so much of a lottery"; as no doubt it is, and always has been.

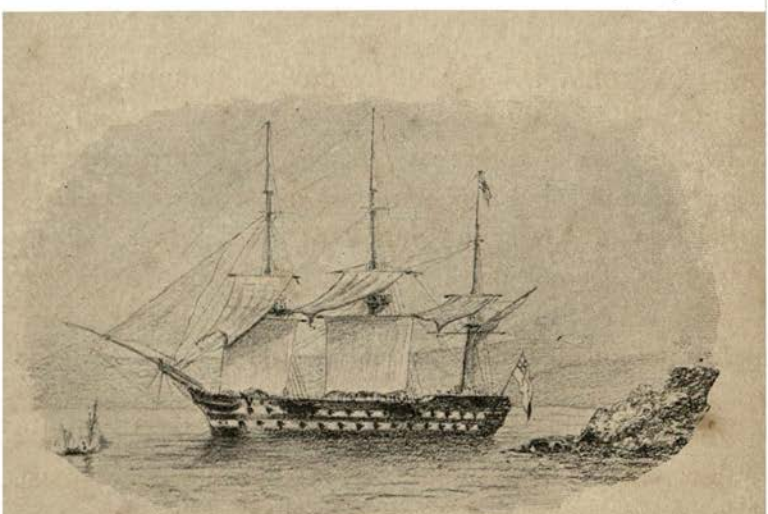
Nothing would satisfy George Tryon but a first-class certificate; and he got it.

His old commander (the present Admiral Bowyear) says of him: "About this time Tryon passed his seamanship examination. He had asked me to set him questions, not in ordinary subjects, but placing ships in difficult positions with regard to coasts, or enemy's ships, &c., and he passed well."

He appears to have realised the disadvantage of being two or three years older than his contem-

poraries, and he made the most strenuous efforts to keep himself in the first flight, and to show by his zeal and diligence that he was worthy of early promotion.

He was rewarded with early promotion in all his steps; thus he was only eight months a mate, six years a lieutenant, and five and a half years a commander. After the step from commander to captain promotion goes entirely by seniority; so Tryon could not play leap-frog any more with his less energetic and ambitious contemporaries. The above was rapid promotion even for those days; and short of the much-abused promotions of flag-lieutenants in "hauling down" vacancies, it was probably amongst the quickest on record.



H.M.S. Vengeance.
From a sketch by G. Tryon.

Lieut. Tryon's tent in the Crimea.
From a sketch by himself.

CHAPTER III.

TRENCHES—CRIMEA—ROYAL ALBERT.

In the last chapter we left the Vengeance weighing anchor and preparing to move down towards Sebastopol after the battle of the Alma, which George Tryon had watched from the main-top with his long glass as signal mate, reporting the various phases of it to the deck.

Admiral Bowyear (commander of the Vengeance in 1854) says with regard to this period: "The duties of the signal officer and his men were most arduous, keeping touch with the armies and witnessing the Alma. Our eyes—as our signalmen were—were at it day and night. Then came the

march round, the occupation of Balaklava, the anchorage of the fleet off the Katcha for watering, &c., the bombardment of Sebastopol on the 17th October, the return to the Katcha, the hurricane on the 14th November, the return of many damaged ships to Constantinople, and the battle of Inkerman, when the Vengeance was anchored off Kasatch Bay, and Tryon in the main-top with his long glass reported continually and with great intelligence until the affair was over; after which he joined the Vengeance's Naval Brigade in the trenches."

Tryon seems to have had a way of making firm and fast friends at all periods of his career, and amongst his juniors quite as much as his seniors. The present Admiral Fane, who was a naval cadet and midshipman in the Vengeance, says of him: "George Tryon was one of my oldest and best of friends; we kept up the closest friendship since the Vengeance days. When I joined the service he was a great long three-yearly midshipman, and, as a matter of fact, took charge of me forthwith without any previous acquaintance, and became there and then my firm friend and 'sea-daddy'—and you know what that meant in days gone by. Since then we have kept up our friendship until the time of his tragic death. You can, therefore, imagine how deeply I felt his loss. . . . I know from his first start in the service how keen he was about everything connected with it. What a log he kept! with such in-

teresting sketches, which I always had to copy. How he worked at seamanship, teaching me with such kind consideration. He was mate of the signals all the Mediterranean and Black Sea time until he landed with the Naval Brigade, and I was his second in command in the signals." . . .

Many of Tryon's shipmates in the Vengeance and the Royal Albert (which he joined afterwards) are still living, and they all agree in describing him at this time as being full of life and energy, amiable, good-humoured, and a leader at all games and amusements, in addition to being full of zeal for the service, and never sparing himself when there was any hard work to be done.

Shortly after the battle of Inkerman he joined the Naval Brigade in the trenches, saw service there, and was reported as slightly wounded; but he appears to have kept this from his mother, and does not mention it in his letters. He was gazetted for services on shore in the Crimea, and reported upon by Captain Stephen Lushington, who commanded the Naval Brigade, as "a very promising young officer."

One of Tryon's exploits while on shore was to build a hut for himself and the other two officers of the Vengeance, which was the envy of the whole Naval Brigade, *for it had glass windows.* "I lent him some strong glass plates," says Admiral Bowyear, "and the Vengeance's hut was the only one that sported glass windows."

Tryon took his long glass on shore with him, and found it useful for reconnoitring the position and proceedings of the enemy. He made the acquaintance of a Russian officer who also rejoiced in a long glass (a species of acquaintance which was not at all uncommon during the siege of Sebastopol). In the early morning, as soon as it was light enough, they reconnoitred each other with their long glasses, to see if anything new had been done during the night; then as soon as they were satisfied, they mounted their respective parapets, waved each other a friendly recognition, jumped down, and blazed away. War is a curious business.

There is an undated letter from George Tryon to his mother, which must have been written almost immediately after he landed, and after it had been decided by the Allied generals to lay regular siege to Sebastopol. He says: "We were sent off the other day with fifty guns to assist the siège-train, and more are landing now. We have from a hundred to a hundred and fifty men from each line-of-battle ship on shore—a merry party, as long as fine weather lasts. . . . It is great fun to see 'Jack' ashore. We run our guns by hand, landed from the ships, much faster than the artillery. Everybody seems to be delighted with the progress we have made, but there is an immense deal to be done. I do not expect we shall open fire for another week. We have just lost some ninety odd horses in a gale

of wind, coming from Varna. We get on pretty fairly as regards grub; we are victualled from the ships, and our men are very ingenious in making many little contrivances. We ought properly to have two lieutenants, but one has gone back sick, so there are two mates" (one of them being Tryon) "and one lieutenant. . . . I have never seen such an extraordinary place as Balaklava, an entrance from the sea about 70 yards wide. . . . I am writing this on the ground, having just returned from dragging eighteen large powder-cases four miles up from here, lashed to a long spar strung on some field-piece carriages we had on board. We also have landed all our marines. . . . You must not be surprised if you do not hear of me for some time, as I very likely shall not be able to write, as Sebastopol is between us and the fleet. I have not seen Henry yet; but I saw one of the Rifles, who said he was well. I must let you know all particulars when I return, for it is quite impossible to write fully now."

The story of the mismanagement of the Commissariat and Army Supply departments during the Crimean campaign, where ship-loads of stores and provisions remained either unstowed on board the ships or else piled in hopeless and inextricable confusion around the shores of Balaklava harbour, whilst the soldiers at the front were perishing for the want of them, is a tale that has been told a thousand times. It is not pleas-

ant reading for Englishmen; and although this departmental mismanagement was in great measure redeemed by some brilliant and memorable feats of arms, and by the dogged and determined courage with which the troops and sailors stuck to their fighting and to the fatiguing labour in the trenches, though half starved and imperfectly clothed, during an almost arctic winter; yet, on the whole, the siege of Sebastopol, taken as a military exploit, and considering the immense resources which the Allies had at their disposal—had they been properly utilised—cannot be looked back upon as one of the brightest pages in the annals of the British army.

The following criticism and explanation of this mismanagement, written just forty years afterwards, by General Sir Evelyn Wood, G.C.B., V.C., is interesting, and seems fair and reasonable. He says:—

It is impossible to write of the sufferings of our soldiers during the Crimean war without seeming to impute gross mismanagement to some or all of those whose duty it was to see that the soldier, whose life must be freely hazarded in battle to attain the end in view, should never want for any article which may enable him to live until required for battle, and in the most perfect condition attainable on service. I will therefore state at once that I intend in this article to cast no reflections on any one serving in the East. Ten years before we went to the Crimea, Rungeet Singh, after seeing our men fight in the Punjaub, said, "If I owned such soldiers, I should carry them in palanquins to the field of battle, let them fight, and carry on for the next engagement any that remained alive." This sounds absurd, but he was

much wiser than Englishmen in 1854, and his plan would have been far less expensive than our haphazard economies. During a peace of forty years the representatives of our taxpayers had insisted on reduction of expenditure in all warlike establishments.

A commissariat officer cannot learn his many duties in a few weeks, any more than a staff officer can acquire from books only, however closely he may read them, that experience and knowledge essential for controlling the different units of an army, to the best advantage of the whole. A Treasury clerk, however able and zealous, who has spent his service in curtailing expenditure, cannot reasonably be expected to launch out in a lavish outlay, for which he has no authority, and thus incur heavy personal pecuniary responsibility, in order to provide in advance for the wants of soldiers, for which he has had no previous experience.[1]

In 1854 General Sir Evelyn Wood was a midshipman in her Majesty's navy, and belonged to the Queen; he was landed with the Queen's Naval Brigade, and served in the trenches. The Queen's and the Diamond's men were brigaded together, and were under the command of Captain Peel of the Diamond. The gallant Peel (younger son of the great Minister), who a few years later gained for himself an undying renown as commander of the Shannon's Naval Brigade during the Indian Mutiny, was at this time (1854) only thirty years of age, and a post-captain. His noble bearing, chivalrous conduct, and the splendid example he set to all his subordinates, made a deep impression on Mr Wood, midshipman of the Queen, who forty years later gives graphic descriptions of some of the

[1] Fortnightly Review, October 1894.

scenes he witnessed in the trenches. But to return to Tryon.

On October the 21st Lieutenant Greathed of the Britannia was killed, and the Admiral gave Tryon the death-vacancy. On the following day he writes to his mother: "I have this day received my promotion, and a letter from you telling me all you had done for me. . . . I am appointed to the Britannia in the place of a poor fellow killed the other day. . . . The Admiral wrote me a note as follows: 'I have promoted you to be a lieutenant of this ship, and you owe it to the conduct and character which you bear in the service. At present you are to remain with the Naval Brigade.' We are firing away all day at the forts and town, and the former are generally much damaged by day, but put all to rights during the night. . . . The fleet have been in action with the forts, and have suffered much; in all 263 casualties, and 47 killed. . . . The Albion and Arethusa are so damaged that they are obliged to leave—first for Constantinople and then for Malta. The Vengeance was very fortunate, only two wounded. They did a good deal of damage to the forts. Tom is very well, and so is Henry; I see them nearly every day."

The three brothers were now fighting before Sebastopol—Tom in the 7th, Henry in the Rifle Brigade, and George in the Naval Brigade. It must have been a proud but anxious time for their mother.

Just a month after the above letter was written Henry was killed at the rifle-pits, in a gallant fight, where he greatly distinguished himself.[1] Not

[1] "The Russian riflemen having established themselves in some rifle-pits in front of the left attack along some rising ground, annoyed our working parties as well as those of the French on the opposite side of the ravine by their fire. Lord Raglan determined to drive them back, and to take possession of the pits. These pits, caverns, or 'ovens' as they were called by the men, are formed by the decay of softer portions of the rock between the harder strata, leaving caves in the sides of the hill. The duty of driving the Russians from them was confided to the first battalion" (Rifle Brigade); "and on November 20th a party consisting of Lieutenant Henry Tryon, in command, with Lieutenants Bourchier and Cuninghame, 4 sergeants, and 200 rank and file, was detached to carry it into execution. It was kept a secret what the service was to be until the party fell in about four o'clock in the afternoon. Then Tryon wheeled them round him, and told the men what they were wanted for. He said that he intended to drive the Russians out, and he was sure they could do it. And right well they did it. Marching down to the trenches, they lay down till dark. They then advanced stealthily, creeping along the broken ground which led first down a slight incline, and then up towards the enemy, who were completely surprised by the attack. Fifty men under Tryon formed the storming column, 50 the supports under Bourchier, and 100 the reserve under Cuninghame. Eventually these parties became practically one. They quickly drove the Russian riflemen from their cover, though supported by a heavy column of Russian infantry. The occupants of the pits were evidently surprised. But soon the guns bearing on the pits poured grape and canister on the riflemen, who had no cover, for the pits were open on the enemy's side. In the moment of taking possession of the pits the gallant Tryon fell shot in the head; Bourchier, who succeeded to the command of the party, maintained his advantage; and Cuninghame greatly distinguished himself by the energy with which he repulsed an attempt to turn the left flank of the advanced party, and thereby ensured the success of the capture. Repeatedly during that long night did the Russians attempt to retake the pits—sometimes by sending forward strong columns, sometimes by creeping up a few at a time, and when they got near making signals for their companions to come on. But this handful of riflemen, under the command of these two young officers, bravely withstood them, and held the position until they were relieved next day by another party of the battalion. In this affair Lieutenant Tryon and 9 men were killed, and 17 men

long afterwards Tom was invalided home sick, and George continued to serve in the trenches with the Britannia's men, as acting lieutenant of that ship, until January of the following year, when he went home to England with the Britannia's landing-party in the Vengeance (his old ship), the Britannia having previously gone home.

There are not many home letters from George during the time he was serving in the trenches—he was no doubt too busy to write much; but on January 9, 1855, he writes to his mother relative to his brother Henry's grave: "I think all your wishes have been anticipated, except the flat stones and inscription: no other grave there of an officer of similar rank has any inscription, but I see they are making one out of a tombstone found here for General Strangways; but whatever is done must be done by his regiment. . . . I have seen uncle Charles to-day, and he agrees with me. . . . Your questions have either been answered in my previous letters or Tom in person will answer them. . . . The weather is now very severe, frost and deep snow, and the ice very thick. The night before last a

wounded. This gallant feat of arms, the first of the kind during that war, and never surpassed, was thus described in the despatch addressed by Lord Raglan to the Duke of Newcastle." Then follows the despatch; and also a general order to the French army from Marshal Canrobert, highly eulogistic of this exploit, and concluding thus: "J'ai voulu rendre hommage devant vous à la vigueur avec laquelle s'est accompli ce hardi coup de main, qui a malheureusement côuté la vie au vaillant capitaine Tryon. Nous lui donnerons les regrets dûs à sa fin glorieuse. Elle resserrera les lien de loyale confraternité qui nous unissent à nos alliés."—From 'The History of the Rifle Brigade,' by Sir William Cope.

thermometer in a tent was 15°, and last night 17°, and so it has been for the last four days. As you perceive, I am writing this in great haste, and am for battery to-morrow: I was in battery last night and came off at 8 A.M. this morning, and then went to see uncle Charles three miles from here, then to the 7th" (his brother Tom's regiment), "and several other regiments, and start for battery to-morrow morning at 4.30. . . . Omer Pasha has arrived, and gone to Eupatoria, where it is said he is going to make a grand diversion. The £10 came just in good time; our ship has not given us our bills, and there is no money in the army box to pay us our field allowance, which was also due at the commencement of this year."

When Tryon wrote the above he had no idea that he was so soon to be relieved from his interesting but arduous work, and sent home: but in this same month (January 1855) the landing-parties of the Britannia, Trafalgar, Vengeance, and Arethusa all embarked on board the Vengeance and sailed for England. Before the Vengeance sailed, the new Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, came on board her and addressed the officers and men who had been employed in the Naval Brigade, and complimented them on the good service they had rendered.

Admiral Dundas, who had been Commander-in-Chief of the British Black Sea fleet up to that date, had sailed for England in his flagship Britannia about a month previously.

Tryon passed his examinations at the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth, and in the Excellent, with credit, and he was out again in the Black Sea in June. His old commander in the Vengeance (Mends) was now flag-captain to Admiral Sir E. Lyons, the Commander-in-Chief, whose flag was flying in the Royal Albert, a splendid brand-new steam three-decker. Captain Mends had formed the highest opinions of Tryon when he served with him in the Vengeance, and having obtained Sir E. Lyons' permission, he applied for Tryon's appointment to the Royal Albert, a request which was complied with.

The final assault on the fortifications on the south side of Sebastopol took place on the 8th of September, on which occasion the French captured the Malikoff, and held it; the English storming-party got into the Redan, but were driven out again, and failed to hold it. The Russian position, however, had become untenable, as the Malikoff dominated the Redan; and during the night the Russians abandoned the whole of the south side of Sebastopol, and retreated across the harbour to the north side, over a bridge of boats which they had previously constructed.

Writing home two days after the fall of the south side, Tryon says: "Our army naturally are much vexed, for in future years it must be said that the French took Sebastopol. . . . On the day of the assault and the day after I was doing the duty of aide-de-camp to the Admiral. I went each day to the camp to collect information. He mounted me,

and as he pressed me for time I had to press his horses. The strength of the second line of defence is much overestimated and exaggerated; in places there is none at all. I was surprised to find I knew so much about the place; but once inside I guided my party about much better than I could have done about Stamford. The time I spent out here before, looking at the place and learning it, was not thrown away, and the day of the assault I was able to tell the Admiral the positions, and success, and non-success of our troops and allies. The ships were to have co-operated, but could not do so owing to the strength of the wind, and to-day we have a gale and are knocking about very disagreeably. The French themselves say that they would never have been able to take the Malikoff if they had not surprised the Russians."

Tryon gives an amusing description of the Allies looting: "You cannot conceive the ridiculous sights in the town. The place is crowded with French soldiers, and some of our own, all loaded with clothing, brass candelabra, furniture, &c., nothing much worth having; and above all the men of the Naval Brigade are conspicuous. I met a party of twelve which had eluded the sentries, and were decorated in the most extraordinary manner; one with a Russian helmet on, a woman's yellow petticoat with a coloured body, and cross-belted over all, with high boots and spurs, and swords and bayonets stuck in the gown to an extent that made you fancy you had met a female war hedgehog."

Tryon next comments on the want of energy shown by the Allies in failing to follow up their success when the Russians evacuated the south side, and then returns to the loot :—

"There is a commission for the distribution of trophies, but nothing much appears to come of it. Meanwhile we all call out for fair play, by which is meant a fair start and no favour, and no one to take more than he can carry; and the French are quietly removing field-pieces and other guns; but of guns there will be plenty for all. . . . I captured the very best camp bedstead I have ever seen—I was much in want of it—and a few other little things. I was dreadfully done out of a large Russian flag which I found on the top of Fort Nicholas. I wound it round my body, and carried it thus on a very hot day for eight miles, eluded all the French and our own sentries, and brought it off safe; but the other day our commander, who is on the commission, was asked to get the Admiral some little thing as a memento, when he told him of my flag, and that he did not doubt but that I should be delighted to give it to him, and I had to do so with a good grace. I have two more which I have since foraged, and said nothing about, and do not intend to, but they are very inferior in size and interest to the other one."

It is probably better to keep one's mouth shut when one is looting, especially when admirals are on the look-out for mementoes, and no doubt Tryon

profited by his experience in this case; but too late to save his flag.

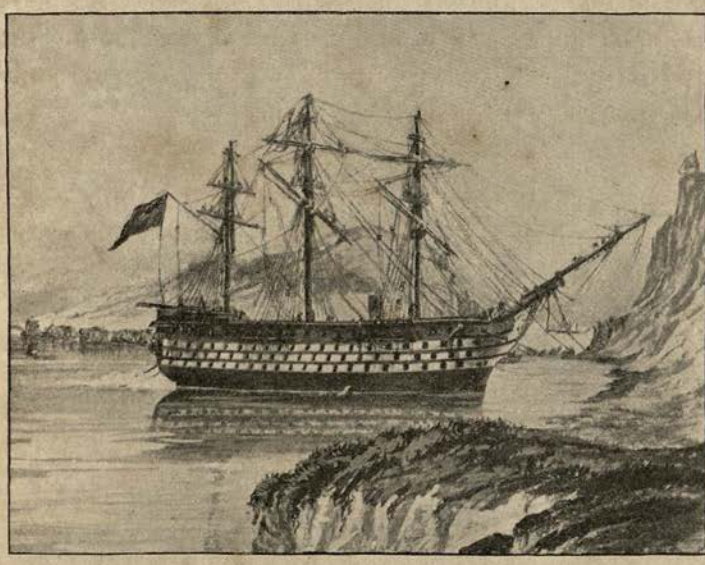
On his return to the Black Sea in the Royal Albert, Tryon did not again join the Naval Brigade on shore; but he was present at the capture of Kinburn, and was one of the first to land after the place surrendered. Kinburn fell on the 17th October 1855, and writing home on the 19th he says: "I was sent on shore, directly the place surrendered, in charge of the fire-parties of the fleet. We isolated the buildings on fire, and let them burn out quietly. The place was full of turkeys and poultry of all kinds, and I saw some very handsome dresses. Being on duty, I did not pick up anything worth having. . . . The palm and honour of this late attack decidedly belongs to the French floating batteries. The garrison was 1300 strong, and they have 150 casualties. I cannot learn that we are likely to follow up our success. We certainly are carrying on the war in a sleepy manner. I suppose this success at Kinburn has opened to us one hundred miles of water as yet unexplored, over which supplies for the army in the Crimea have been transported, and here we are with the door open, and have already given them four days to remove their vessels to places of safety." No doubt Tryon gave voice to the general naval opinion on the subject at the time. How far he was right, or otherwise, need not be discussed here. Junior officers on the spot do not always

see the whole of the game; and although they are usually keen critics, it occasionally happens that they are not in possession of all the knowledge which guides a commander-in-chief in his actions.

Towards the close of 1855 it became evident that Russia was exhausted, and had had enough of fighting for the present. France also had gained a sufficiency of glory, and had no particular desire to continue the war. England was just getting into fighting trim, and had spent enormous sums of money in building new ships and making steamers of old ones, and in building hundreds of steam gunboats of very light draught of water for special service in the Baltic and Black Sea. She also built several ironclad floating batteries, as they were then called, the precursor of the present ironclad. In short, she was in all respects ready to continue the war; and having once drawn the sword, she might well have supported the brave Circassians in their gallant fight for independence, and taken adequate steps to keep the Russians off the road to India. The first would have secured the second. It would have been a graceful act, and entirely in accordance with our national traditions: it would, moreover, have been a statesmanlike act; and had it been taken, it is certain that the Great Bear would not now be knocking at the gates of India. But it is easy to be wise after the event, and quite useless to cry over spilt milk. The country wanted peace;

our statesmen were magnanimous, and signed the Peace of Paris in March 1856, a barren peace for England; but England shouted and rejoiced, for she knew not the things that belonged to her peace.

In December 1855 Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, the Commander-in-Chief of the British Mediter-



H.M.S. Royal Albert.
In Port Nicols, Isle of Zea.

ranean fleet, left the Black Sea in a mail-steamer, for Marseilles and Paris, in order to attend the Peace conference, and his flagship the Royal Albert sailed for Malta. It was during this voyage that the extraordinary accident happened to the Royal Albert which astonished the naval world at the time, and which would certainly have resulted in

the foundering of the ship, but for the ready resource and bold practical seamanship exhibited by her captain, William Mends. She was steaming quietly through the Ægean Sea when the gland which makes watertight the hole in the stern-post, through which the screw-shaft passes, suddenly gave out. The lignum vitæ strips broke up altogether, and the water rushed into the ship in large volumes. The ordinary pumps were quite inadequate to deal with such a leak, and the bilge-injection was immediately put on.

It is necessary that we should pause here to explain to our non-naval readers the meaning of this marine-engineering jargon. The "bilge-injection" means that an arrangement is made in steamers by which the water required for condensing the steam after it has passed through the cylinders, in order to produce the necessary vacuum in the condenser, is taken from the bilge (*i.e.*, from the inside of the ship herself) instead of from the sea outside the ship. As the quantity of water required for this purpose is very large, and as the pump attached to the main engines (curiously called the "air-pump") immediately pumps the water overboard after it has been used for condensing the steam, it is obvious that the use of the bilge-injection gives an immense power of dealing with a bad leak, so long as the engines are kept working; but directly the engines are stopped the bilge-injection stops also, and—in the present case—the ship would sink.

Here, then, was an interesting problem for Captain

Mends. He did not know how much more the leak might increase. He dare not stop the engines for a moment on penalty of the water putting out the fires, and the ship sinking in a very short time. He was near land,—the island of Zea,—but it was night, and the shores of the island were rocky, with the exception of a sandy bay, which he could not find in the dark. He had one of the finest ships in the British navy, and the lives of 1100 men depending on the soundness of his judgment and discretion, and he must have spent an anxious night; but he proved himself to be equal to the occasion. He steamed round and round the island until it was daylight, and then ran into the sandy bay; let go both anchors just before she got to the shore (so as to be ready to haul the ship off again), and steamed her bows straight on to the beach: hawsers were then got out from the mast-heads to the shore to steady the ship, and the engines were still kept working ahead for four days, so as to keep the leak down, while a coffer-dam was built across the after-part of the ship, to confine the water and keep it out of the body of the ship. There were no water-tight compartments in those days.

Out of his seven lieutenants Captain Mends selected Tryon to go off to Athens for assistance. He says (writing in 1894): "When I was obliged to beach the ship in Port Nicols, Isle of Zea, to save her from foundering, I selected Tryon, though junior, to intercept a passing steamer, and proceed in her to the Piræus to report us to the senior

naval officer there, as I knew we had some ships there. I had not at the moment time to write, but hastily told Tryon what to say. This he did, and we were quickly joined by the Princess Royal and Sphinx, by which ships we were convoyed to Malta as soon as I had arrested the leak and floated the ship. It would be invidious were I to speak more highly of one officer than another when all worked so zealously and well; but Tryon had a marked intelligence, and was specially suited for the job."

After surviving the above-mentioned extraordinary accident, and being thoroughly repaired at Malta, the Royal Albert, still bearing the flag of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Edmund Lyons, returned to Constantinople, and anchored at Buyukdere in the Bosphorus, remaining there for nine months. The officers appear to have had a gay time of it, and between their duties on board, shooting-parties in the country, and balls and entertainments at Constantinople, their time must have been fully occupied.

Writing home at this time, Tryon tells an amusing story of a patriotic Englishman who kept a mill at Kertch. It may be as well not to give his name, as he or some of his friends may chance to read these lines.

Tryon says: "I do not know whether I told you in my last of a man named ——, an Englishman who owned a steam-mill at Kertch, and who ground the corn for the Russian troops during the winter of '54-55, and who gave himself up when we took

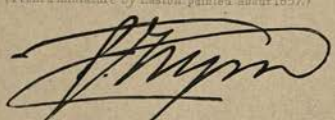
Kertch, after stowing himself away for two days, and finding escape impossible. He afterwards was our interpreter for some time, indeed until the peace. He passed through here the other day in one of the steamers for the new Russian lines about to be run in the Black Sea; and he stated that he had kept concealed from us some valuable Russian documents, and £7000 of Russian Government money. When peace was declared he returned it to the Russians, and was told to pay all his expenses in England, and to take £1000 as a present besides. This present was accompanied by an autograph letter from the Grand Duke Constantine, commending him for his conduct, and giving him a splendid appointment at Nicolaif. We destroyed his mill at Kertch, and our Government remunerated him for it, and allowed him to sell his flour, &c., and paid him 26s. a-day when with us; and now the Russians have paid him besides, and I daresay he was in their pay the whole time."

After leaving Constantinople and the Sea of Marmora the Royal Albert cruised round the Mediterranean in the intervals between her long spells at Malta, and visited some of the most interesting places on the station,—all of which are described by Tryon in his home letters with freshness and originality; but nothing of special interest occurred. In November 1857 he got a bad attack of rheumatic fever, and had to go to hospital at Malta, but was not long ill; and when he got better the Admiral (now Lord Lyons) sent him

away on leave to Italy to recruit his health. Tryon went to Naples, and met some friends there, and had a very pleasant time, seeing Pompeii and the famous Naples museum at his leisure, and of course going up Vesuvius, which was at this time unusually active. He also visited Rome and Florence, and was greatly delighted with the treasures of art at both places. Later, when the Royal Albert went to Gibraltar, he visited Cadiz and Seville, and saw a bull-fight; but this does not appear to have given him much gratification.

Tryon's home letters from the Royal Albert show his great anxiety as to how he was to get his next step. He fully realised the disadvantage of being a year or two older than men of his own seniority, and although the present age retirement scheme for naval officers was not then in force, it must have been obvious to him that unless he could get some special appointment, such as a flag-lieutenancy on the royal yacht, so as to carry him over the heads of many of his seniors, there would be very little chance of his being in the first flight of his profession, and reaching the highest ranks; and nothing less than this would satisfy his ambition. He had but few influential friends to interest themselves in his behalf, and it must have been mainly owing to the favourable reports as to his zeal and ability which reached the Admiralty from the various captains under whom he had served, that his name was submitted to her Majesty (amongst other lieutenants) for selection for service in the royal

(From a miniature by Easton, painted about 1857.)



yacht. Her Majesty selected Tryon, and his after-life and services showed that he was worthy of her choice. The honour in itself is great, and it also carries with it the substantial advantage of promotion to the rank of commander at the end of two years. Still it must be admitted that Tryon was lucky; for it is well known that in a service like the navy, the highest ability, the most devoted zeal, and exceptional talents, occasionally go unrecognised and unrewarded. As long as human nature remains what it is, it will be impossible to eliminate personal feeling and some favouritism from a service where promotions are made by selection; but there are many thoughtful officers who would rather see all the old-fashioned jobbery of the last century restored (and it must be admitted that it brought some good men to the top of the tree) than see the navy reduced to the deadly, zeal-killing, spirit-depressing level of a seniority service. There is no reason why we should have either one or the other, but rather, perhaps, a happy combination of the two; and there are some who think that the present system of recognising and rewarding well-backed and properly represented zeal and ability, with just a slight flavouring of social and family interest, is the best system which poor, weak, democratic human nature can devise.

The Royal Albert went home to England, and paid off on the 24th of August 1858. And in the following November Lieutenant Tryon was appointed to the royal yacht.

Before the Royal Albert paid off she took part in the demonstrations at Cherbourg, on the occasion of her Majesty visiting the Emperor and Empress of the French at that port, and dining with them on board the Bretagne, a splendid French three-decker.

The festivities were conducted with great pomp and display, and Tryon's remarks thereon are interesting.

Writing to his father on July 21, 1858, from the Royal Albert at Spithead, he says: "The Duc de Malakoff embarks in us with his suite for Cherbourg. . . . Nothing is known or settled about the number of ships that are to escort the Queen." Then, after the visit had taken place and the Royal Albert was once more lying at Spithead, he writes: "We arrived off Cherbourg on Wednesday about three hours before the Queen, who was punctual to a minute in entering the port. We formed in two lines, and so arranged our speed that she should pass through and between us about a mile from the port which she was to enter, leading us in. . . . The French liners and frigates fired *feux de joie* of over 4000 guns on our entering—a very imposing and beautiful salute; and the forts fired salvoes at the same time. The amount of powder used must have been enormous, for they repeated this every time the Queen or Emperor landed or embarked. The Queen remained on board her yacht the first day, and the Emperor went to visit her in his State barge with the Em-

press, &c. . . . It was quite dark when he left, and we illuminated and saluted, and cheered, and all that sort of thing. The next day the Queen landed under the same salutes, and went for a drive with the Emperor, Empress, and Prince Albert, in one carriage, followed by five others. . . . I was for some minutes within ten yards of the royal party: the Empress is very pretty, and was beautifully dressed; the Emperor has grown coarse and aged. The Queen walked for some time to visit the new basin, and then embarked under the same salutes. In the evening the Emperor went on board the Bretagne to receive her Majesty, who dined on board with him. Lord Lyons was of the party. . . . After dinner some very good fireworks were let off from the centre of the breakwater. . . . We waited till the French had finished, and then lit up. We dressed our men in white so as to reflect the light, and lit up long lights on each truck, each yard-arm, and fore and aft along the nettings, besides lighting up every port in the ship. A man stood on the fore-truck for some time on one leg with a long light in his hand, and was very conspicuous. . . . This morning the Emperor went on board our royal yacht to take leave of the Queen; the usual salutes going and coming: then at the signal we all weighed anchor together, in two lines close together, and the Queen passed down the centre of the lines, out of the harbour, under a roar of 4000 guns besides our own. Nothing could possibly

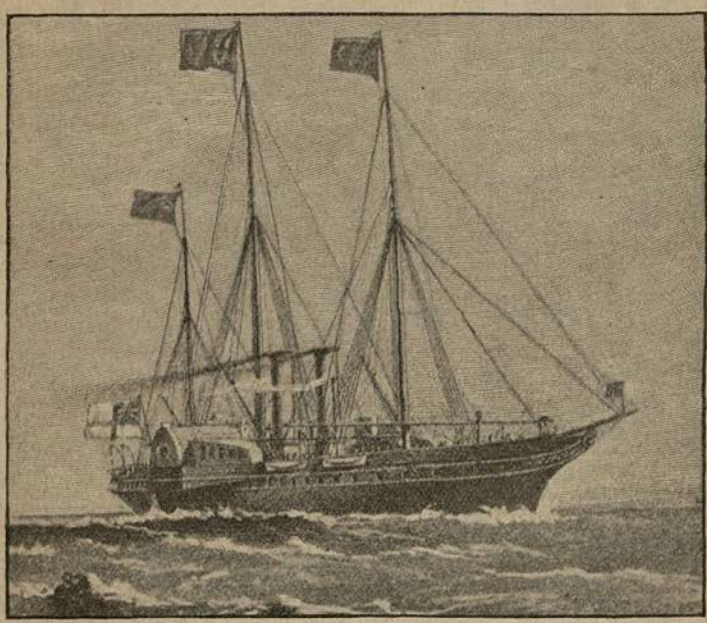
have been better arranged than our part of the business: it went off beautifully, and all to a nicety. . . . Directly we got clear of the breakwater we made all sail and left Cherbourg, going 13¼ knots an hour, and met the yachts racing for the Emperor's cup close outside. . . . The noisiest set of people in Cherbourg harbour were our own House of Commons. Every variety of hat and coat a man can conceive was in their steamer; I never saw such a set of roughs. . . . The admiral" (Lord Lyons) "was so ill that he was obliged to leave the grand dinner on board the Bretagne; and I fancy his illness prevented any one from visiting this ship. He is free from pain, but suffering from weakness; and all this anxiety has not allowed him peace to get round."

Shortly after these gaieties the Royal Albert was paid off, and on the 4th of November 1858 Lieutenant Tryon was appointed to the royal yacht, thus securing his early promotion to the rank of commander.

There are always two lieutenants in her Majesty's yacht, and one of these is promoted in the autumn of every year, after the Queen leaves Osborne. The one who has been longest in the yacht is the one who gets the annual promotion, irrespective of whether he is the senior or not; and the vacancy is then filled up: so that an officer has to serve two years in the yacht before getting his promotion.

Service in the royal yacht is not of an active or busy nature. The officers, and a reduced ship's

company, live on board the old Royal George hulk in Portsmouth harbour for nine months out of the twelve, and if truth must be told, they have very little to do. It is probable that to a man of active and energetic temperament like Tryon such a life must have been somewhat irksome; though doubt-

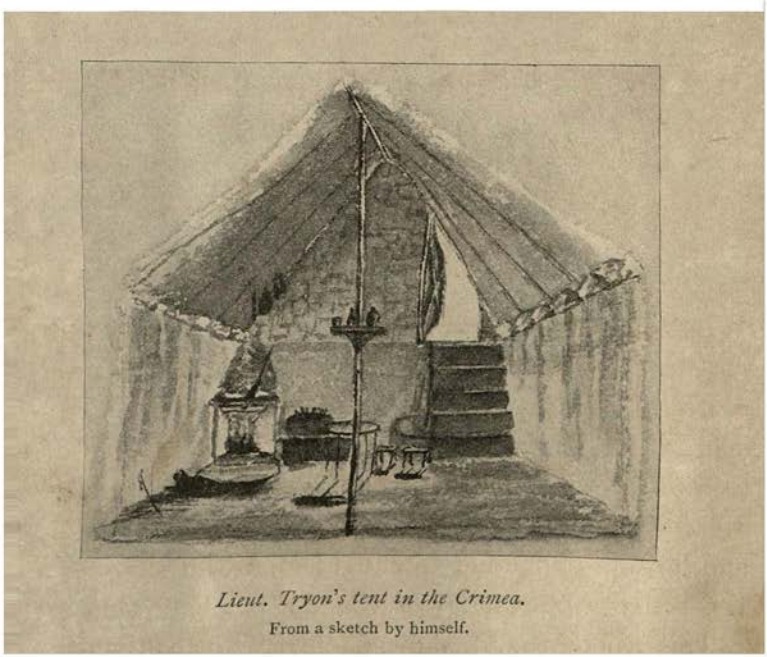


The Royal Yacht.

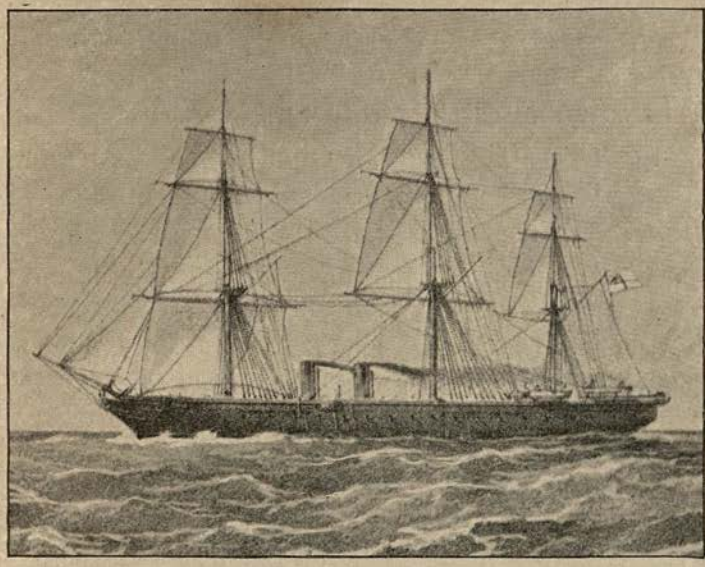
less the knowledge that he would get out of "the ruck," and jump over the heads of hundreds of his seniors, after being only six years a lieutenant, was calculated to soothe his feelings, and make amends to him for his enforced idleness, from a professional point of view; but as Tryon was always a good hand at amusing himself when there was no im-

mediate work to be done, we may be sure that he was not altogether idle.

There is but little record of his service in the yacht, either from letters or otherwise; but on getting his promotion and leaving her in the autumn of 1860, her captain, the Hon. J. Denman, reported of him "as an officer of great zeal and promise. His ready resource, active intelligence, sound judgment, and good temper, especially qualify him for success in his profession; and I consider it my duty to recommend him strongly to their Lordships as an officer likely to perform any service required of him with ability."



Lieut. Tryon's tent in the Crimea.
From a sketch by himself.



H.M.S. Warrior.

CHAPTER IV.

H.M.S. WARRIOR.

When Tryon was promoted to the rank of commander in October 1860, he was put (in the natural course of events) upon half-pay: but he did not remain there long; and in June 1861 he was selected to be the commander of the Warrior, then preparing for her first commission, in the Victoria Docks; and he was appointed to the Fisguard for service in the Warrior, as the latter was not yet habitable.

This appointment showed clearly the estimation

in which Tryon was held at the Admiralty. The Warrior was expected to be, in the fullest sense of the words, a "crack ship." She was the first really sea-going British ironclad. She was nearly 400 feet long, and over 9000 tons burden—gigantic dimensions for those days—and she excited great expectations. She was built as a reply to the French La Gloire, and was larger, longer, and faster. She was also built of iron instead of wood, and whereas La Gloire decayed, after a few years' service, the Warrior is as sound at the end of thirty-five years as the day she was launched; though, of course, somewhat obsolete in structural arrangements, engines, and armament. But in 1861 she was one of the wonders of the world, and Tryon was very proud of being appointed as her first commander,—as well he might be. The heaviest gun afloat at that time was the 68-pounder smooth-bore, and the Warrior's battery, covered with $4\frac{1}{2}$-inch armour plates, was absolutely shot-proof, and of course shell-proof also, so that it was supposed the Warrior in action would have been equal to half-a-dozen line-of-battle ships. She was also a beautiful ship to look at—probably the handsomest ironclad ever built in any country—and she could steam more than 14 knots, a high rate of speed for a man-of-war in those days. She was fully rigged, and sailed well also; and she was, in truth, a noble-looking ship, and a most formidable one too. But the impenetrable sides of the Warrior very quickly set the gun-demon to work, and before many years had

passed, guns were made, the projectiles from which would pass through the sides of the Warrior as if they had been brown paper; and then commenced the battle between guns and armour, which has raged ever since, and done so much for the iron and steel trade, and enabled the tax-payers of the various European countries to get rid of some of their superfluous millions.

It is argued by a certain school of political economists that these millions are wasted, as all men-of-war are unproductive, and bring no return for the capital expended upon them. It is true in one sense that all money paid as insurance brings no visible profit; and yet all sensible men insure their private property. But it is eminently untrue in the case of nations, and especially so of those which live by maritime commerce; as the sense of security, which can alone be obtained by the maintenance of adequate armaments, does produce a very real and tangible money value, by insuring that confidence and stability without which trade can never really flourish, and by enabling the nation which possesses it to borrow money at a very much lower rate of interest than a nation which does not possess it. It may be said in reply to this, that if nations did not go to war and keep up large armies and navies they would not want to borrow money, and there would be no national debts. True, perhaps. And also, perhaps, it is more practical to take human nature as we find it, and to make our plans accordingly, rather than to indulge in interesting specula-

tions as to how much better we could have made man if we had had the making of him, and been able to form him in a perfectly peaceful mould, without any pugnacious tendencies. But if we look upon the interest which Great Britain pays upon her National Debt as the rent of the present British empire, it cannot be regarded as an exorbitant one.

The Warrior cost (according to Brassey) £356,693,—less than half the cost of a modern first-class ironclad, but still a considerable sum; and she represented for thirty years a material portion of the insurance of the British empire. It is possible—nay, highly probable—that the fact of her existence, and that of a few other items of the same nature, have been the direct means of averting a war which would have cost hundreds of millions. And had the fortune of such a war gone against us,—which without our Warriors it well might have done,—there would in addition have been the payment of a gigantic war indemnity, and such a loss of territory as would have dethroned Great Britain from her position as a great Power, and left her the poorest and most miserable nation in Europe, if indeed she had remained an independent Power at all. These facts are worth keeping in sight if possible, though they unfortunately undergo periodical phases of occultation in the minds of the British public.

We find that all through his life, from the first moment that he gives any indication of thinking on

the subject at all, this conviction of the absolute dependence of his country on her navy for existence is ever present, and uppermost, in the mind of George Tryon. We see it in his writings, his words, and his acts.

A few months after the appearance of the Warrior, her sister ship, the Black Prince, appeared on the scene. They were both built from the same drawings, and were supposed to be in all respects alike. The Warrior was built at Blackwall, and the Black Prince at Glasgow; and they were both engined by Penn, with the largest engines at that time ever fitted in a man-of-war. As a matter of fact, no two ships ever are exactly alike—there are always some slight differences between them; so it was only natural that when the Warrior and the Black Prince met, there should be the keenest rivalry between them. Writing to his father on the subject in November 1862, Tryon says: "We raced the Black Prince at full speed; the last of a series of trials with her, through the 'gut,' into the Bay of Gibraltar. It was a pretty sight, two such immense ships tugging away as hard as they could go, with the greatest excitement on board all the vessels. We passed our wooden friends as though they were at anchor, and starting 450 yards astern of the Black Prince passed her in an hour and a half. On every trial we have most unmistakably beaten her. . . . Some snob wrote to the 'Times' —as you saw—that the Black Prince was fully equal to us under steam, and superior under sail.

I have explained this, and it is due to those in the Black Prince to say that they regret that anything of the sort should have been sent to the 'Times.'"

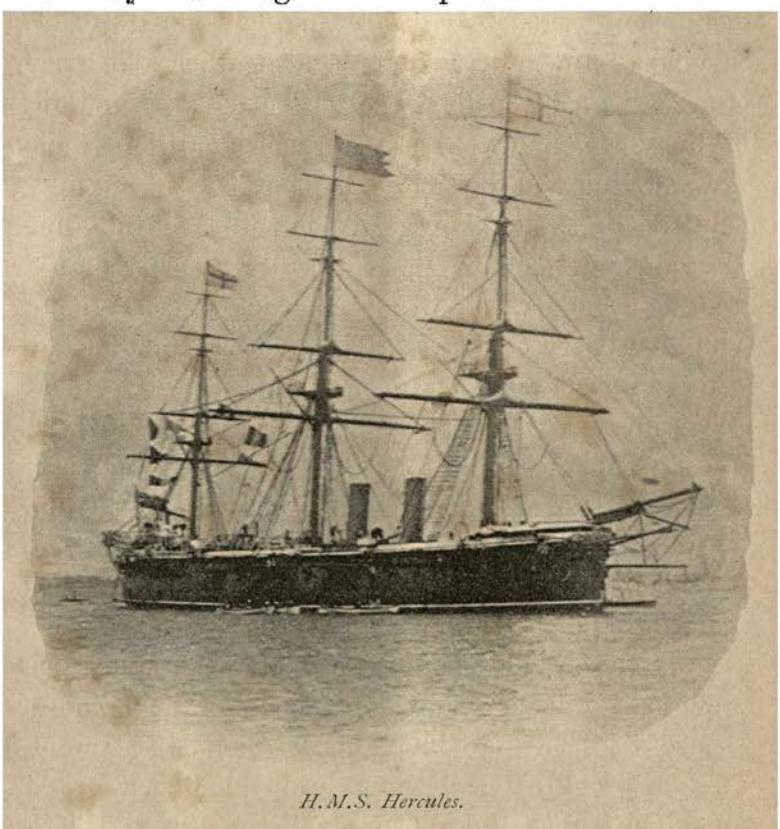
Here we see that keen spirit of rivalry, inherited from the old sailing days of the Vengeance; and that sailor-like sentiment which (notwithstanding it was only a steam trial, depending on the skill of the engineers and stokers) makes all seamen firmly believe that their own ship is better than any other ship. It must, however, have been so obvious to all impartial minds that any one who said the Black Prince was as fast as the Warrior must be a snob of the first water, that it seems almost superfluous for a practical man like Tryon to mention it.

The Warrior cruised about with the Channel Squadron on the usual cruising-ground—Lisbon, Gibraltar, Madeira, &c. She could not keep pace with the old wooden ships under sail alone, in ordinary weather, or light winds; but when it blew hard enough, she was able to do so. Her sail-area was equal to that of an ordinary line-of-battle ship, or first-class frigate of the period, but her tonnage was much greater, and she was very much longer; so that although her lines were finer, the extra weight to be driven through the water, and the excess of skin-friction, due to greater length, rendered her unable to hold her own in light winds with smaller ships. She had, however, great stability, or, in nautical parlance, she was "as stiff as a church"; so that she could carry her sail

as long as the gear would stand. Her length also gave her great power in a seaway, and she was thus enabled to get to windward of her wooden rivals in bad weather; but on looking through her logs for this period, we frequently come across the entry (in fine weather), "Using steam to keep station," which is significant.

Looking back to this period of our naval development (1861), and taking into consideration that even our most sailor-like seamen had for years admitted that all actions would in future be fought under steam alone, it seems difficult to account for the extraordinary value which was still placed upon sailing qualities, and for the sacrifices which were made in all our earlier ironclads in order to retain that which, at its best, was but a grotesque caricature of the attributes of a *bonâ fide* sailing-ship. In fact, it required double screws to squeeze this idea out of the heads of our thoroughly conservative naval administrators. As an instance of how hard this notion died, it may be mentioned that in the Hercules, which did not appear upon the scene until the end of 1868, there was fitted a balanced rudder, in order to increase her handiness under steam; but as it was suggested that this new-fangled invention of science might possibly interfere with her sailing qualities, an ingenious but complicated arrangement was made, by which the foremost or balancing part of the rudder could be disconnected from the after part and locked, so as to represent the deadwood, and the after part worked

alone. It was found in practice that it mattered nothing whether the rudder was used as a balanced rudder or as a simple one, as the ship could not be depended upon to steer under sail with any rudder, or any trimming or manipulation of her sails.



H.M.S. Hercules.

Twenty-five years later she was denuded of her sails altogether.

Not only were numerous and grave sacrifices made for the sake of sails in our ironclads for many years after the *début* of the Warrior, but a

good deal was also thought of appearances—that is to say, the nautical eye being unaccustomed to any arrangement of lines and curves other than those which prevailed in the old wooden ships, pronounced all innovations to be hideous, and it took a long time to educate the naval taste, and convince seamen that shape is altogether a matter of prejudice and custom, and that the combination of lines and curves in an ironclad are just as symmetrical and beautiful as they are in an old three-decker. Probably that famous painter, the Chevalier de Martino, has done as much as any man living to dispel the old prejudice, and convince both seamen and landsmen that an ironclad can be a very beautiful and noble object. The Warrior and Black Prince, however, combined all the grandeur of an ironclad with the head-knee, figurehead, and stern profile of a wooden frigate, so dear to seamen; and they were pronounced to be splendid-looking ships, and are probably still considered the handsomest ironclads ever built.

Tryon was not a man who made a parade of his religion; but he was a good man in the broadest sense of the words—an honest, genial, straightforward English gentleman, incapable of a crooked, a selfish, or an unkind action. The present rector of Sudeley, the Rev. R. Noble Jackson, says of him: "My remembrance of Tryon dates long back—to a time when he was commander and I chaplain of H.M.S. Warrior. He was then all one could desire in a naval officer; bold, intelligent, and

full of resource, open-hearted, manly, and generous, respected by others, and respecting their feelings and sensibilities: and I can say that I never heard from his lips any word that could cause a blush or give pain to any one. After about two years' intimate association with him, messing daily at the same table, I was called away by . . . but I have ever since watched his career with pride and pleasure."

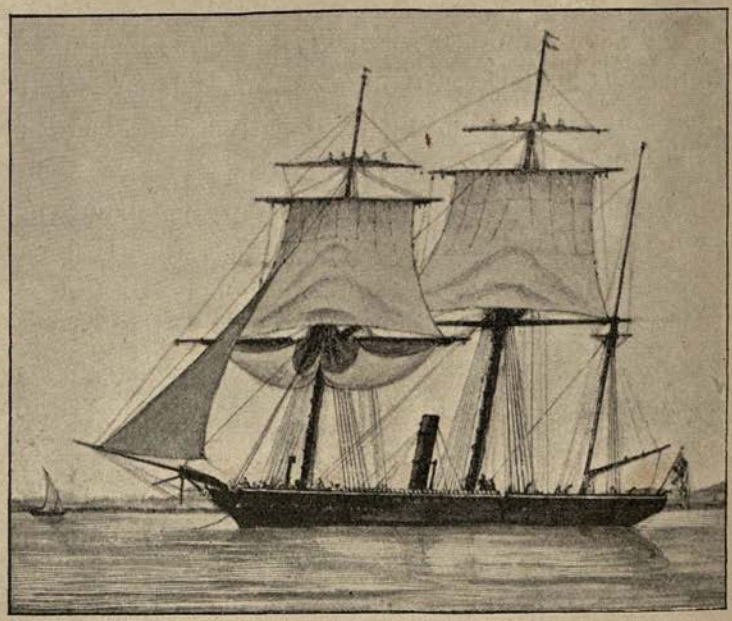
This is high praise from the parson; for the commander of a man-of-war is a sorely tried individual, and the most civil-spoken, mildest-mannered commander that ever cleared lower deck, or put a ship about, is sometimes tempted, beyond the limits of human endurance, to distribute some of those pungent nautical compliments which are not always taken as kindly as they are meant.

Tryon had all his life a wonderful command over his temper: he was not one of those slow, deliberate, cold-blooded people who have no tempers to lose—on the contrary, his temperament was just the reverse, quick, warm, and somewhat impatient of delay; but his self-command never forsook him. No matter how great the provocation might be, he could restrain his indignation, and give his orders calmly and thoughtfully,—an inestimable quality in one whose mission it is to command men, either ashore or afloat.

In March 1863 the Warrior escorted the Princess Alexandra of Denmark to England, when she came over as the affianced bride of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. There was much enthusiasm in the country

when the fair young Danish princess came to take up her abode amongst us as the wife of our future king, and the Admiralty very properly sent the finest ship in the British navy to escort her to our shores. Her Majesty sent her own yacht the Victoria and Albert to bring the Princess over, and the Warrior performed the duty of escort so satisfactorily, and kept so close to the royal yacht, following her up through the intricate navigation of the estuary of the Thames, that the Princess Alexandra was greatly pleased at the performance of the monster ironclad, and requested that the signal might be made to the Warrior, "Princess is much pleased"; words which the captain of the Warrior caused to be inscribed in brass letters on the wheel (which in those days stood upon the quarter-deck), and there they remained for many years as a memento of this interesting event: and possibly they are there still.

In the autumn of 1863 the Warrior—in company with the Channel Squadron—went round the coasts of England and Scotland, visiting all the principal mercantile ports of the United Kingdom, the officers and men being received and entertained with that hospitality which always marks such visits; the Warrior herself being the principal centre of attraction and interest. She paid off in November 1864; but Tryon had left her in the previous July to take up what he no doubt looked upon as a much more desirable appointment—viz., a separate command in the Mediterranean.



H.M.S. Surprise.

CHAPTER V.

H.M.S. SURPRISE.

On the 11th of August 1864 Commander Tryon was appointed to the command of H.M.S. Surprise, a 4-gun screw gun-vessel of 680 tons and 200 horse-power, employed on the Mediterranean station.

This was a very interesting command, and Tryon cruised about and saw a good deal of the station, and showed on several occasions his wonted energy and resource, and his powers of intelligent observation.

One of the most interesting services which it fell to his lot to perform while in command of the Surprise was the rescue of the British barque Energy, which had run on shore on the coast of Sicily, about seven miles from Pozallo, and had been abandoned by her crew and scuttled by the natives. It must certainly have looked about as hopeless a job as ever a resourceful seaman put his hand to,—for the barque was stranded on an open sandy beach; she had made a bed for herself in the sand several feet deep; and she was in three feet less water than the lightest draught that she could safely be lightened to, for if all her cargo were taken out of her she must inevitably capsize. But Tryon was not to be daunted by trifles of this sort, and set to work about the business in a thoroughly seamanlike manner; and notwithstanding that the work was interrupted, and the vessel driven broadside-on to the shore by rollers setting in suddenly in the middle of the operations, the crew of the Surprise, inspired by the example of their captain, stuck to the job, and in little more than two days they had the Energy afloat, and took her back to Malta in triumph.

Admiral Sir Robert Smart, the Commander-in-Chief on the Mediterranean station, had specially selected Tryon for this service; and in reporting the case to the Admiralty, and recommending that the officers and crew of the Surprise should be allowed to claim salvage, he says: "This service has been performed in a highly creditable and sea-

manlike manner by Commander Tryon and the officers and ship's company under his command, and I gladly take advantage of this opportunity to express to their Lordships the high opinion I have formed of Commander Tryon, whom I knew in the Warrior as well as in his present command. I have found him a most valuable, painstaking officer, an intelligent seaman, and most trustworthy in all matters I have employed him in."

The Admiralty approved of the claim for salvage being made, and called it "a most important service very well performed," and the salvage allowed was £595, to be divided amongst the officers and ship's company.

During the time Tryon commanded the Surprise he sent to the Admiralty, through his Commander-in-Chief, some very thoughtful and practical remarks upon the subject of the internal management, discipline, and award of punishments in H.M. navy. One point concerning which he was very emphatic was the injustice and impolicy of stopping the men's pay as a punishment for leave-breaking, beyond the time for which they were actually absent or incapable through drink. His views on this subject were shortly afterwards adopted, and embodied in the general regulations of the service. His ideas on punishment were humane without being weak, and he believed in the certainty of punishment rather than in its severity.

In February 1866 the Surprise visited that most remarkable and interesting of the Greek islands,

Santorin, with its perpendicular cliffs, its extraordinary-looking towns, perched up on the top, and the very edge, of precipices, which look from the sea to be quite perpendicular, and are in fact almost so.

The island of Santorin represents about two-thirds of the rim of the crater of an enormous volcano, the rest of it being submerged, except one or two ragged bits of rock to the southward, and two small islands formed of lava and scoriæ in the centre. There is hardly any anchorage inside the crater, the water being much too deep.

It cannot be described as an extinct volcano, as it is still subject to eruptions, and Tryon in the Surprise was fortunate enough to see one of these, a submarine one; and a very marvellous sight it must have been. He thus describes it in his official report to Admiral Sir Robert Smart:—

"On Friday the 16th of February H.M.S. Surprise approached the island of Santorin from the westward, and having sighted the island of Neo Kamina, we observed a vast jet of steam rising from the sea near its southernmost point, which was generated with extraordinary rapidity; but as it expanded in volume it apparently lost much of its velocity, and rolled over the neighbouring islands, partially obscuring them from view. On examining this more closely we found that it arose from a new crater situated 150 fathoms from the south point of Neo Kamina, and that a new island had been formed, which has been named by the Greek commissioners,

sent to observe the eruption, 'Aphrusa.' This new island has sprung from a depth of 14 fathoms, and is now 100 yards long and 50 wide, and is daily increasing. Its birth was very gradual: it first showed above water on February 13; two days before this it was a fathom under water, and the sea in its neighbourhood was boiling and much discoloured. First a rock rose above the surface, then two or three, and they sank and rose again several times, till at last a considerable island was formed of lava, the centre of which is red-hot.

"I learnt that the first appearance of an eruption which was observed from Thera was on January 26, when the small bay in Neo Kamina, known as 'Mineral Creek,' was observed to be in a state of ebullition, and within it, on January 30, the first rock showed itself above the surface of the water. On February 16 the creek was not only completely filled up, but a pile of lava 300 yards long by 200 wide was thrown up, and had completely buried the houses that were in the way. . . .

"H.M.S. Surprise was anchored on the small shoal to the eastward of Mekras Kamina, clear of the vapour, to watch the eruption. Three or four explosions took place, one similar to the other on each night, the first perhaps being the most violent. At a quarter to 9 P.M. on the 16th a roar was heard as though several hundred rockets had been fired, and we observed a dense black cloud which had been thrown up as a shell from a mortar, which the wind—then blowing half a gale—carried far over

our mast-heads. Nothing whatever that we could see fell near us. Excepting when such an explosion took place, the vapour given off was white."

During the two years that Tryon commanded the Surprise in the Mediterranean she appears to have been very actively employed on various parts of the station. At one time we find her commander examining and reporting upon a shoal off Acre on the coast of Syria; then at Patras in the Gulf of Corinth, looking after British interests; then shortly afterwards she is visiting the principal ports on the coast of Spain, and Commander Tryon is sending to his superiors valuable and exhaustive reports upon the resources, docking accommodation, coaling facilities, and other useful information concerning Carthagena, Malaga, and other Spanish ports.

Tryon was certainly not one of those quiet, easy-going people who—in nautical parlance—are content to "sit still and let the wind blow them along." He was always busy, always active; his mind and his energies devoted to the service, yet by no means indifferent to sport and amusement when these came in his way. On the contrary, he came of a sporting family, and was very keen about all field sports. Even up to the latter years of his life, when he was Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, and was almost weighed down by the cares of his command, and had but little time to devote to anything but his office and his fleet, he still took a lively interest in all kinds of sport, and although

he possessed but scant opportunity to enjoy it himself, he was ever ready to let those under his orders do so, so far as this could be done without prejudice to the one great primary interest—"the service."

Amongst other ports visited by the Surprise was Gibraltar: she was there several times, and on the occasion of one of her visits Commander Tryon was called upon by the senior naval officer (Captain Prevost) to report on a proposal, which it appears had been made by the governor (General Sir Wm. Codrington), to the effect that the naval depot and storehouses at Rosia Bay should be handed over to the military authorities — either made over altogether, or at any rate loaned to them—on the ground that these buildings were not all occupied or required by the navy in time of peace. Tryon wrote an exhaustive and thoughtful memorandum on the subject, which need not be quoted here; but he pointed out the extreme strategic importance of Gibraltar to the British navy in case of war, and that Rosia Bay was by far the most convenient place for a naval store depot, whereas it did not matter how far from the shore the army commissariat stores might be placed,—the great question for the navy being the rapidity with which their stores could be embarked. A few hours' delay might make (as he pointed out) the difference of a good many miles with modern steamships, and possibly the failure of a chase or strategic combination. And then, after pointing out that if Gibraltar were ever again besieged, and the fleet unable to

get at it to relieve it, the garrison would be so much the richer by the naval provisions which would of course be then at their disposal, he winds up thus: "It is very undesirable that they [the storehouses] should be even lent. The difficulties that would be temporarily removed by doing so would be very much increased should the borrowers be ever ejected, which would only occur at a time when they would have to provide stowage, not only for those stores temporarily accommodated by the Admiralty, but also for a vastly increased supply. The position of Gibraltar is almost the same as if the Royal Clarence Victualling-Yard at Gosport was requested on loan as a barrack because the whole of the establishment was not required during peace. The demand made here requests the Admiralty to voluntarily yield up space and stores invaluable to them and their ships, and to deprive themselves of the only means of expanding the capabilities of this port to meet any future emergencies."

It is only within the last few years that it has come to be generally recognised that the only value of Gibraltar to the empire is as a place for the replenishment of the British fleet; but Tryon held this view nearly thirty years ago.

The Surprise sailed from the Mediterranean station, homeward bound to pay off, on the 4th of April 1866, and arrived in Plymouth Sound on the 12th. On his arrival in England Tryon found that he was a post-captain, his commission being dated

the 11th—the day before his arrival. The Surprise had been nearly five years in commission, though Tryon had only been in her about two years.

By his promotion in April 1866 Tryon had only been five and a half years a commander, and as he was but six years a lieutenant, he found himself—in spite of his late entry into the service as a cadet—a post-captain at the comparatively early age of thirty-four; and as he had but little naval interest save what he made for himself, it must be acknowledged that his success was mainly due to his own exertions, to the zeal and professional ability which he exhibited,—qualities which were recognised and duly appreciated by the officers under whom he served.

CHAPTER VI.

ABYSSINIA.

AFTER the Surprise paid off, and Tryon was promoted to the rank of captain, he went on half-pay, and for a year and four months enjoyed that freedom which some few naval officers sigh for, but which some, on the other hand, try to avoid; but in Tryon's case it can scarcely be doubted that he thoroughly enjoyed a short relaxation from the very constant active employment afloat which had been his lot since his first entry into the service.

He first went to the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth to study steam, for it was now generally recognised that it was essential for executive officers to possess a fair general knowledge of the engines and boilers of the ships which they would be called upon to command, and Tryon had no intention of being behindhand in this matter; so he diligently studied steam for some months, obtaining the usual certificate, and then went to Norway for a real holiday, on a fishing ex-

pedition, and was in Norway when he was recalled to take up an important appointment.

In August 1867 he was appointed as "additional captain" to the Octavia, for transport service with the Abyssinian expedition. The Octavia was the flagship on the East Indian station, and was then carrying the broad pennant of Commodore Leopold Heath. This appointment did not mean that Captain Tryon was to join the Octavia, but that he was simply to be borne on her books, and to do duty as transport officer at Annesley Bay, where all the troops and stores were landed, for Sir Robert Napier's famous expedition to Magdāla, to enforce the release of the British captives there imprisoned by King Theodore.

It would be entirely outside the scope of this narrative to enter into the causes which led to the Abyssinian expedition of 1867, or into a detailed account of the military operations which resulted in the fall of Magdāla, the death of Theodore, the rescue of the captives, and the safe return and re-embarkation of the army. These have been fully related by Captain H. Hozier in his very interesting book, 'The British Expedition to Abyssinia.'[1] It was undertaken tardily to save the honour of Great Britain; and terrible things were prophesied of the deadly climate and other insurmountable difficulties which would be met with: but the expedition — confided to the command and management of that able and ex-

[1] Macmillan & Co., 1869.

perienced soldier Sir Robert Napier — was eminently successful. British arms regained some of their ancient prestige, and the ten or twelve millions which the expedition cost the country must be considered as well expended. There was not much fighting; and it was an expedition which depended for its success mainly on the perfect organisation for the supply of a small army at a great distance from its base, in a mountainous country without roads, presenting formidable physical difficulties, and with a population which, though not actively hostile, was certainly ready to become so at the first sign of a reverse, or at the least prospect of successful plunder,—the so-called Christians of Abyssinia being very little better than any other African savages.

Tryon's service as transport officer to the Abyssinian expedition cannot be said to have been exactly a thankless service, for he received full recognition and credit both from the army authorities and from his own superiors for the admirable manner in which he conducted the duties; but yet it was not the kind of service which is generally considered brilliant, or attractive to a young navy captain yearning to distinguish himself in his profession. It was likely to be—and in fact proved to be—an extremely arduous service. There was no prospect of getting to the front and seeing any fighting, but, on the contrary, the certainty of remaining on the unhealthy and oppressively hot coast; constant hard work,

somewhat strange to a naval officer; all sorts and conditions of men to deal with; conflicting views and interests to reconcile; many an irate commissariat officer and merchant captain to pacify; and, in short, a fine field for the exercise of great tact, judgment, and organisation of details; and it is probable that a forecast of the numerous difficulties to be overcome, coupled with his zeal and anxiety to render good service in any capacity, was a sufficient reason to cause Tryon to accept the appointment without a moment's hesitation.

He left England for Bombay on the 17th September 1867, and arrived there on the 10th of October; and immediately placed himself in communication with the Commodore and the Governor of Bombay, both of whom were on the council for the organisation of the expedition.

There appears to have been some little friction at first with regard to Tryon's prospective duties, as the Commodore had already commenced to arrange matters in the transport department in conjunction with Captain Young of the Indian Marine; but the difficulty was smoothed over by the tact of the Governor, and Tryon went heartily into the work of organisation.

The advance party, or pioneers of the expedition, left Bombay early in October for the base of operations at Zoulla (or "Zulla" as Captain Hozier spells it), to prepare for the landing of the main body; but the latter was not ready to start from Bombay until the middle of November.

Zoulla is situated in Annesley Bay, a spacious well-protected harbour on the west shore of the Red Sea, about 250 miles from the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, and about 350 from Aden. It is probably the hottest place on earth; in fact, old soldiers say that there is only a sheet of brown paper between it and Pluto's workshop, and they ought to know.

The majority of the transports for the conveyance of the expedition from Bombay to Annesley Bay were chartered at Bombay. Some were chartered at Calcutta, and some at Suez; and about a dozen of the finest and largest steamers were chartered in England and sent to Bombay *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope, as this was in pre-canal days. Altogether there were 291 transports employed, not counting tugs, lighters, and native craft.

It is not proposed to weary the reader with the dry details and statistics of the expedition, though some figures may not be uninteresting, as showing the difficulties attending the placing of a few thousand men in fighting trim at Magdāla, 380 miles from the base at Zoulla.

The total number of British soldiers and sailors (the latter consisting of a naval rocket brigade) before Magdāla when it fell was only 4044: of these 2118 were Europeans, and 1926 native Indian troops; but the total number of fighting men employed in the operations, keeping open the long line of communications, was 13,164—of whom 4114 were Europeans, and 9050 native Indians. The

total number of people of all sorts and conditions employed in the expedition, including crews of transports, camp-followers, &c., amounted to the grand total of 62,220. And these had to be fed and watered. The total number of animals landed at Zoulla from transports was 36,094; consisting of 2538 horses, 44 elephants, 17,673 mules and ponies, 5735 camels, 1759 asses, 7071 bullocks. And these had to be fed and watered.

One of the greatest difficulties at Zoulla was the water. After the first few days there was no drinkable water there, and it all had to be condensed by the steamers in the bay, and landed for the use of man and beast. The total amount of water so condensed amounted to 29,068 tons, and the coal expended in making this water to 8020 tons.

These figures will give some idea of the work done at Annesley Bay.

Mr Thomas Bowling, R.N., who was on Captain Tryon's staff, and acted as his secretary, has most kindly furnished some interesting notes on the duties and anxieties, as well as the energy and tact, of the transport officer.

It appears that Captain Tryon and his staff first established themselves on board a sailing transport called the British Monarch; but soon transhipped to the steamship Euphrates, so as to be better able to move about from place to place if it became necessary to do so. Mr Bowling says:—

"The troops now began to arrive in quick suc-

cession, and transports full of stores and animals were arriving daily. Those containing troops, animals, and such stores as were wanted immediately, were at once cleared under Captain Tryon's direction, and despatched back to the ports from whence they came for fresh cargoes. Steam transports were kept constantly running from Suez to the base with camels, mules, and forage; and others to and from Berbera with camels and camp-followers; besides a constant service to and from Bombay with stores and details. The great majority of ships chartered were sailing vessels, and a service of powerful steam-tugs was organised between Zoulla and Aden" (distant between 300 and 400 miles) "to pick up vessels bound for the bay, and to tow those going back to India clear of the dangers off the mouth of the bay. . . . As each vessel arrived her cargo was carefully tabulated, and her capacity for conveying troops, camp-followers, and animals of any sort minutely registered, so that any emergency could be at once provided for. . . . There was full scope for all the zeal and energy which were so conspicuous in Captain Tryon during this life in Annesley Bay. It required a person of no common grasp of mind to deal with the various types of character which were to be found among the masters and crews of the transports, and to make things work harmoniously among such oddly assorted elements. Matters of dispute between the masters and their officers and crews were of pretty frequent occurrence, but were promptly settled by

Captain Tryon, when referred to him. In only one case did he find it necessary to get the master of a ship removed; and then he wrote to the owners, telling them that he would not consider their ship efficient under the terms of the charter-party unless they sent out a more satisfactory captain, and by return mail a new captain arrived. . . . Captain Tryon was very popular with the army authorities on shore; and during the whole expedition there was never the least shadow of disagreement with any of the departments. He used to visit all the heads of departments every morning before breakfast, and by thus ascertaining their wants, could map out the day's work for clearing such and such transports, sending others away, and so on.

"After the great heat of the day was over, he landed again for a ride, and as a rule met the general commanding at the base, and others whom he had not seen in the morning. His mind was ever intent on his work, and he would talk over various details and mature plans for subsequent action during the whole evening, and often—when sleep was impossible on account of the heat—far into the night.

"His health, until towards the end of the expedition, was robust, and he never lost his energy even during the time of the greatest heat, the want of rest seeming to have no effect upon him, except to make his mind more active—if that were possible.

"At a fire which occurred on board the transport Far East he exerted himself in a way to shame

many younger men, keeping at it all night, and not leaving the scene until the fire had been entirely subdued. He hurt his leg during the fire by swinging against a hatch whilst hanging to a rope directing operations; but though the injury was sufficient to compel him to lay up for some days afterwards, it did not have the slightest influence on his exertions at the time.

"During the month of May 1868 a heavy blow from the S.E. surprised the fleet of transports, causing them to drag their anchors; the result was a great number of collisions. There were thirteen groups of collisions, some of the groups containing as many as five vessels; and the whole of the resources of the tugs (nine in number) were put into requisition to try and clear them. Captain Tryon was in the midst of this work the whole day, and only left the scene when darkness stopped any further efforts until the following morning, when he was again at it directing operations until the last of the vessels in collision had got a clear berth, which was not until late on the second day."

Mr Bowling then relates how Tryon dealt with some of the merchant captains who tried to make good capital out of the damages which their ships received through the collisions. It appears that there was no very serious damage done to any of them,—nothing, in fact, which could not be temporarily but effectively repaired with due energy, and with their own resources. Nevertheless, some of the captains reported that their ships were unable

to go to sea to fetch more stores, animals, or coolies until they had been properly repaired. "Very well," said Tryon, "until your ships are repaired you will be considered 'out of pay.'" This frightened the captains; and although it was, of course, doubtful, or perhaps more than doubtful, whether such a decision could be enforced, seeing that the damages had been caused by stress of weather, yet the captains concerned did not care to run the risk of such a loss to their owners, and they all set to work with such energy to get their damages made good that in a very short time they were all able to report their ships efficient and ready for sea. When asked at the conclusion of the operations if he wished these stoppages enforced, Tryon replied, that in view of the energetic efforts of all concerned to render the damaged ships fit for service in the shortest possible time, he considered that the suspension from payment might be remitted. This was probably a wise decision, for more reasons than one.

On another occasion the captain of one of the steamers which was used for condensing water represented that his engines were suffering undue wear and tear from being kept continually going astern whilst condensing, the ship being moored and revolving round her moorings. The captain pointed out that the design of the engines contemplated their going ahead almost continuously, but going astern only occasionally, and that, therefore, the thrust-bearings would not stand the work, and he claimed a rest, or else special compensation for undue

wear and tear. Tryon, however, upset his argument in a very few words. He pointed out that if the engines were undergoing greater wear, the hull was escaping the strain of being at sea, rolling about with a full cargo on board; and he gave him the following alternative: If the constant going astern was bad for the engines, he could slip his moorings and steam round and round the bay, thus keeping the engines going ahead instead of astern, but he must go on condensing at any cost. As, however, there were between 150 and 200 transports anchored in the bay, the captain came to the conclusion that he was better off as he was, and there was nothing more heard of his complaint.

Tryon was no doubt arbitrary, and ruled with a strong hand; but what confusion there would have been with a weaker man in his place.

The appointment of a transport officer from England could not have been very agreeable to Commodore Heath, who was a first-class commodore in chief command of the station, and had already commenced to make all his own arrangements for the transport service in conjunction with Captain Young, the Marine Superintendent at Bombay, when Tryon suddenly appeared on the scene with his Admiralty appointment. But Commodore Heath was not the man to let his own feelings—whatever they might be—interfere in the smallest degree with the interests of the public service: the two men worked cordially together; and Commodore Heath (now Admiral Sir Leopold Heath) pays a high tribute to

Tryon's immense zeal and energy, and to the conspicuous ability which he exhibited in his management of the transport service at Annesley Bay; and in his official report to the Admiralty he says, "Captain Tryon has worked the transport department with great zeal and energy, and has secured the goodwill of all the heads of departments with whom he has had to deal."

The naval officer who had the closest association with Tryon (next to his secretary) during the Abyssinian expedition was the commander of the Octavia, Commodore Heath's flagship; this was Wm. H. Maxwell (now Admiral Maxwell). They had not met before this, and never served together since; but Tryon's ability and unbounded energy made a deep impression upon Commander Maxwell, who has the clearest recollection of the time they worked together at Annesley Bay: and his own words give such a clear and vivid idea of Tryon's remarkable personality, that to attempt a paraphrase of them would be to rob them of their originality, and to deprive them of much of that spirit of affectionate regard and admiration which they so happily convey. Admiral Maxwell says: "He was Director of Transports during the Abyssinian expedition, and I was commander of the Octavia, and consequently was much and closely connected with him in the way of business, and there was hardly a day from the beginning to the end of the operations that I had not something to do with him. Our chief was Commodore (now

Admiral) Sir Leopold Heath, and the flag-captain was dear Colin Campbell,—long since dead,—who was an old and great personal friend of Tryon's; and from first to last there was never the smallest hitch or trouble, or (as far as I know) disagreement of any sort, and all the work went like a clock. What most impressed me about Tryon was his great talent for organisation, his capacity for work, his foresight and clear-headedness, and the pluck and cheeriness with which he did his work in the face of —at one time—painful illness, and a climate which tended to make most people feel, and look, as if they had no backbone left. He had at one time a painful eruption on one of his legs, brought on by climate and hard work, which must have made his life a burden to him, but which he never allowed to interfere with his work. I remember that he had a great dislike to this being alluded to, or to being asked how he was, though one could see in his face how he was suffering. The heat on the shores and in the harbours of the Red Sea in May and June is awful. The work of landing stores, provisions, and animals went on during nearly the whole time; and all these latter, and the troops, had for a long time to be altogether watered by the condensers of the ships—men-of-war and transports. Large numbers of the latter had to be kept at Zoulla for no other purpose for many weeks. The harbour was crowded with ships, and the work falling upon the Director of Transports was immense. Though zeal and good spirit were universal, it required a master hand and

a strong will to keep all the wheels of this great machine in proper working order, and one felt that Tryon was the right man in the right place. As you may suppose—knowing what he was—the numerous merchant captains over whom he ruled had a great awe of him, but at the same time a great admiration and respect, and a word from him was enough at any moment to bring a refractory subject into line, and to disentangle any of the threads that had got mixed. He was the connecting-link between the naval and military authorities; everything went through him; and to him it is due that all worked so well—to his tact and judgment that all went so smoothly. At the end of the day—often well into the night—when he had got all the requisitions from the troops, all the reports of the transports, &c., and had arranged what work was to be done on the next day, he used to come on board the Octavia to make his requisitions from the squadron, and then our working-parties from the ships were arranged for the next morning's five-o'clock start. He often used to look dead-beat at this time, but was always cheery and full of go. I believe the military authorities thoroughly appreciated him, and considered his work one of the main factors in the perfect success of the expedition. The present Lord Roberts was Deputy Adjutant-General at Zoulla then, and saw a great deal of Tryon, and would, I have no doubt, bear witness to this. They had a great deal of work to do together. I heard Lord Napier the Commander-in-Chief pay Tryon

(and indeed the navy generally) the highest possible compliments at the time of his return from Magdala and the re-embarkation of the expedition. I remember that I considered Roberts and Tryon to be the two hardest worked men in the whole force."

Now, when we remember the relative positions of Maxwell and Tryon,—the commander of the flagship, anxious of course to keep his men on board, and to keep his ship clean and tidy; and the importunate, requisitioning transport officer, asking for every available hand for his working-parties,—it will be acknowledged (at any rate by naval men) that praise from Maxwell was worth having.

And this is what Lord Roberts says, writing in February 1895: "On my arrival in Annesley Bay in January 1868 I was ordered to remain at the base and carry on the duties in connection with the transport of the troops. It was an agreeable surprise to me to find an old schoolfellow in the transport officer, Captain Tryon, R.N. During the four months I was at Zula I was in almost daily communication with him; and I was much struck by the masterly manner in which he had grasped the situation, by his intimate knowledge of detail, and by the hold he had over the commanders of the several vessels lying in Annesley Bay. Tryon's powers of organisation were quite unusual; and when Sir Robert Napier's orders were received for the re-embarkation of the force, Tryon had made such excellent arrangements that I was enabled to send the several regiments and detachments on board

the transports told off for their accommodation as they arrived from the front, thus avoiding any detention at Zula—a matter of some importance, both on account of the great heat, and the absence of drinking water, every drop of which used on shore had to be condensed."

Even Tryon's magnificent constitution was not proof against the great heat, the debilitating climate, and the constant hard work; and towards the end of the six months he spent at Annesley Bay he became ill, and suffered a good deal, but he would not give in.

Mr Bowling (Tryon's secretary, who also appears to have had an iron constitution, and who kept an excellent journal) further relates: "The troops began to re-embark for the purpose of leaving the country before the middle of May, and the captives who had been released arrived from the front at the end of that month, and Sir Robert Napier about a week later. During this time, and until the whole force had re-embarked, and the last ship had left the bay, Captain Tryon gave himself no rest, day or night. This naturally told on him, and he became so much worn out that on two or three occasions he could not keep up; but the indomitable energy of the man could not be restrained, and against the doctor's advice he would be at work again long before he should have left his bed. That the climate should have told upon him is not to be wondered at, when one remembers that he had been for six months in the debilitating climate of the Red

Sea without a change, and during a great portion of that time the temperature ranged from 100° to 108° under the break of the poop of a ship lying well out in the stream, with a moderate breeze blowing during the hottest part of the day. On Good Friday eleven people were knocked down by the sun at Zoulla, several of them dying on the spot. Thirty-nine camels and a number of bullocks and sheep were also killed by the heat on that day. Any refreshing sleep was hard to obtain, as the nights were almost as hot as the days. Before the end came one-half of Captain Tryon's staff had been compelled to invalid, and the remainder were all, more or less, suffering from the effects of the heat. At length, having seen the last ship leave Annesley Bay, he himself sailed for Bombay, where he spent a month replying to questions, clearing his accounts, and paying off the transports."

In spite of—or rather perhaps in consequence of—the firm and vigorous rule with which Tryon administered the transport department, he was not only greatly respected, but much liked, by the captains of the 291 ships that were placed under his orders, and they testified their regard and gratitude in a very substantial manner by presenting him with a handsome and valuable service of plate on his return to England; and before leaving Bombay they presented him with an address on parchment, in which the following occurs:—

"We, the commanders of the hired transports of the late Abyssinian expedition, learning that you

purpose leaving here for home by the next mail, take this the only opportunity we are likely ever to have of addressing you collectively. We feel that the part of the expedition which was under your command was as successful as any other branch of it, and we attribute this success largely to your influence and management, to your justice and general kindness, and to your perseverance and forbearance. . . . We therefore avail ourselves of this opportunity of expressing to you our estimate of your rule over us, and our respect for its nature; and as we wish on a future day to present you with something commemorative of our gratitude, we must here ask you in advance, when it is forwarded to you, kindly to accept it. Wishing you a pleasant passage home, with long life and every prosperity, —We are," &c.

Signed by a committee, on behalf of all the captains of the transports.

The service of plate, specially designed by Elkington, commemorative of some of the principal events of the Abyssinian expedition, was subsequently presented to Captain Tryon at Liverpool, on which occasion Mr Graves, on behalf of the Mercantile Marine Association, addressed him in suitable terms, to which Tryon made a graceful and modest reply.

The centrepiece bore the following inscription: "Presented to Captain Tryon, R.N., by the commanders of the transports engaged in the late Abyssinian expedition, as a token of their appreciation of his courtesy and kindness to them whilst

in discharge of his arduous duties at Annesley Bay, as principal agent of transports afloat."

When we remember that there always has been, and always must be, some natural divergence of ideas concerning the methods of enforcing discipline between the officers of the Royal Navy and the Mercantile Marine, this spontaneous act of regard and good feeling on the part of the men over whom he had ruled with such a strong hand must have been peculiarly gratifying to Tryon; probably one of the pleasantest incidents of the whole campaign, though doubtless he also felt highly honoured by the Companionship of the Bath, which her Majesty bestowed upon him as a reward for his services. He also received from the Admiralty, and from the Director of Transports (his old captain, Admiral Sir William Mends), the highest commendations for the manner in which he had performed his duties in Abyssinia.

Although Tryon stuck to his work as long as there was work to be done, he suffered for it afterwards. Mr Bowling says: "That he was very much shaken when he landed in England I was myself witness, but how long it took before he recovered I am unaware, as I left England again shortly afterwards in the Ariadne. At first he could not walk from his lodgings in York Street, St James's Square, down to the Army and Navy Club, without halting to rest on the way, and holding on to the railings."

CHAPTER VII.

AT THE ADMIRALTY.

On April 5, 1869, Captain Tryon was married at St George's, Hanover Square, to the Hon. Clementina C. Heathcote, eldest daughter of the late Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Bart., created Baron Aveland. Miss Heathcote's mother became Baroness Willoughby de Eresby in her own right in 1871. This barony, which passes in the female line, dates back to 1313.

Tryon had been attached to his future wife for many years; their parents were near neighbours and old friends.

When George was a boy he used to act in charades at Stocken Hall, Miss Heathcote's early home; and he was always most good-natured in taking the parts which the others disliked.

The newly married couple spent their honeymoon at Bulby Hall, Lincolnshire, belonging to her brother, the present Earl of Ancaster, and they then travelled abroad for three months.

They crossed the Mont Cenis Pass into Italy, and had a narrow escape of a railway accident descending the zigzags on the Italian side. Some workmen, thinking the train had passed, left an obstruction on the line, and it was only seen just in time to apply the powerful brakes and avert what would probably have been a fatal accident. They saw the sights of Milan, enjoyed the beauties of Venice, and then crossed the Brenner Pass, and rested at Innsbruck. The attractions of Munich detained them some days, but the sailor could not be induced to do any amateur "going aloft" whilst on shore, and nothing would persuade him to ascend into the head of the huge statue of Bavaria. They visited the beautiful falls of the Traun, caught trout in the river at Ischl, and then went down the Danube by steamer to Vienna, and were much struck by the width and volume of the mighty river.

Prague, with its medieval buildings, greatly interested them, and this was the furthest limit of their wanderings. Then they turned homewards, their next resting-place being Dresden, where the famous china manufactories were duly inspected and admired. From Dresden they also visited the Castle of Marotsburg, with its wonderful collection of stags' horns, and where also they saw the "wild boars" fed. They were told that this was one of the sights that they ought on no account to miss, and Tryon, with his sporting instincts, wanted to be off

to see the wild boars immediately, even if he were not allowed to stick them or shoot them; but Mrs Tryon was rather nervous at the idea of getting in amongst a whole troop of wild boars. She was reassured, however, when she was told she could see it all from a carriage, and was much amused at seeing these veritable hairy wild pigs, followed by troops of their little ones, coming to the "chuck, chuck, chuck" of the keeper to be fed, for all the world like domestic pigs.

The Tryons went down the Rhine in a steamer, and ran aground on a sandbank. The captain and crew were glad to avail themselves of the nautical advice and suggestions of Captain Tryon, and the little vessel was soon got afloat again and proceeded on her voyage.

On their arrival in England in the autumn of 1869 the Tryons hired Tickhill Castle, near Doncaster, and there for two seasons he thoroughly enjoyed good shooting and good hunting with Lord Galway's hounds. He was a bold though judicious rider, and was generally well up.

The above was the brief holiday of George Tryon's life; almost all the rest of it was hard work.

In April 1871 Captain Tryon was offered, and accepted, the appointment of Private Secretary to the Right Hon. G. J. Goschen, the First Lord of the Admiralty. In accepting this appointment he bade a last farewell to the pleasures of a country life, which he so thoroughly enjoyed; and he ever after

spoke with deep regret at having to give up Tickhill, where he had met with so much kindness and hospitality from his neighbours.

The Private Secretary to the First Lord is usually a post-captain of ten or twelve years' standing. It is not usual to appoint a junior captain, and very unusual to appoint a captain who has not served at sea in that rank. The general feeling of the service is strongly in favour of one of the senior captains on the list holding the appointment, a man who has had wide experience in that rank, and who has an extensive personal knowledge of the qualifications and reputation of most of the captains and commanders on the active list. It is a position in which a man of ability and of a strong personality can exercise great power for good or evil: more power in many cases than one of the Sea Lords of the Admiralty. Tryon was certainly a man of a strong personality, though he had no experience as a captain, and there is no doubt that his appointment caused feelings of jealousy amongst many of his less gifted seniors; and there is no doubt also that he filled the post with credit to himself, benefit to the service, and great satisfaction to his chief. Mr Goschen has the pleasantest recollections of his private secretary: he held him in high esteem. He says of him: "I had an immensely high opinion not only of his naval knowledge, but of his general *savoir faire*, rapidity of judgment, decision, extraordinary shrewdness, and great knowledge of men. He was somewhat cynical

in his views of human nature, but his cynicism was of a good-humoured and harmless cast."

One point about Tryon, during the time he was private secretary, which struck Mr Goschen forcibly, was the consistent manner in which he urged the claims of the navy to participate in Court favours and honours, such as invitations to royal balls, concerts, &c.,—honours which had up to this period been almost exclusively lavished on the sister service. Probably many naval officers have recognised and appreciated the great change which has lately taken place in this respect, but are not aware that it was owing to the energy and loyalty to his profession of Tryon, acting as the confidential adviser of a fair-minded, firm First Lord of the Admiralty, that the recent recognition of the navy at Court is largely due.

On the occasion of the public thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral for the recovery of the Prince of Wales in 1872, Tryon was most anxious that the navy should be properly and worthily represented as the senior service, and urged his chief to insist that it should have the place of honour, and be duly represented at the most important position in the route of the procession; and this was considered to be the open space in front of St Paul's. A brigade of seamen was formed of men from the three principal naval ports,—Portsmouth, Chatham, and Devonport,—and they came to London to do honour to the occasion, and to join in the festivities; but it was suggested by the Court and military authorities

who had the arrangement of the positions of the different troops who were to take part in the pageant that the seamen should take up their position in the square in front of Buckingham Palace. "No," said Tryon to his chief, "don't allow it; that is not the place of honour: the place for the Naval Brigade is at St Paul's, on the right of the line, as the senior service." Then Trafalgar Square was suggested as being "particularly appropriate" for the seamen; but Tryon urged his chief to reject this also, and Mr Goschen being equally firm, the point was carried, and the blue-jackets stood on the right of the line of the guard of honour in front of St Paul's.

It may appear to some people that this was but a trivial matter for Tryon to make such a fuss about; but it must be remembered that these little questions of precedence are just the subjects upon which people feel most strongly, and which give rise to the most terrible and destructive social hurricanes. Tryon was entirely in the right in insisting on the place of honour for the navy; and on this occasion, as indeed all through his service, he loyally used all his influence to prevent his profession from being snubbed or in any way placed in the background.

This naval expedition to London was extremely popular, not only with the navy but with the general public, and the sailors met with the warmest and most enthusiastic reception.

Mr Goschen relates a story about Tryon which

illustrates amusingly the latter's shrewdness and readiness of resource.

It appears that an officer had been appointed to take command of a small ship on the east coast of Africa. Not much was known about the officer at the Admiralty; but he had a fair record, and stood in such a position on the list that he might reasonably expect a command. Tryon made inquiries about him, but "the man at the club" would not say anything about him one way or the other. No sooner, however, was the appointment gazetted than Tryon's friends at the club said to him: "How could you let the First Lord appoint So-and-so to the command of a ship? He drinks."

This of course was reported to Mr Goschen at once by Tryon, who remarked at the same time that some way must be found to escape from the dilemma. Mr Goschen asked him how he would manage it. "Oh," said Tryon, "if you will give me forty-eight hours I think I shall be able to hit on some way of escape." In due course the newly appointed commander came to thank the private secretary for his command; but directly Tryon saw him he exclaimed, "Good heavens, Captain ——! how ill you look! It will never do for you to go to the coast of Africa looking like that. It is a most deadly climate. I am not long back from Abyssinia myself, and I know what the East Coast is like. You will be simply walking into your grave if you go out there!"

The officer was thoroughly alarmed. A guilty conscience no doubt assisted; and on the following day Tryon came to his chief with a radiant face and announced that Captain —— had asked leave to resign his appointment.

Thus the First Lord was extricated from a difficulty, and in all probability the service saved from a scandal.

During the time that Tryon was private secretary to Mr Goschen, the latter had many opportunities of observing his quickness of wit and shrewd deductions in small things as in great. On one occasion they went down together, in company with some of the other Lords of the Admiralty, to inspect the Britannia (the training-ship for naval cadets) at Dartmouth. It was in the month of July, and on passing up the Dart a large grass-field was pointed out to the First Lord, and he was told that it was the field in which the cadets played cricket, football, and other games. Tryon, who was standing at his elbow, remarked quietly, "Well, if it is, all I know is, they must have been kept out of it for the last month or two." "How do you know that?" asked Mr Goschen. "Look at the new hay-stack in the corner," said Tryon; "the chaplain must keep a pony."

On the occasion of the visit of the late Shah of Persia to England in 1872, the Lords of the Admiralty went down from London to take part in his reception at Dover, and there appears to have been some doubt as to whether uniform or

plain clothes were to be worn by the "Board" and the private secretary; so, to make sure, and be ready for any emergency, Tryon wore his plain clothes, and carried his uniform in a bag. The arrangements for the reception of "My Lords" do not seem to have been very good, for on arrival at the railway station they found they had some distance to walk and great crowds of people to force their way through. Tryon announced to a friend who was with him that he did not intend to carry his own bag, but that he meant to get one of the naval lords to carry it for him during the morning. So he turned to Admiral —— and said, "Oh, Admiral ——, will you hold on to my bag for a minute while I clear a way for your lordships through the crowd?" He then went ahead, and with his stalwart figure soon made a lane for them; but he took good care not to go back to Admiral —— for his bag, and the latter had to carry it all the way. He laughed heartily with his friend over his successful device. The love of fun was as strong in the post captain as it had been in the midshipman, and he was as fond of a lark of this kind as a schoolboy home for the holidays.

The duties of private secretary to the First Lord of the Admiralty are of such a strictly confidential nature, that it is not surprising how little information is forthcoming relative to Tryon's work during this period of his career—though there is abundant evidence to show that he filled the post

with credit to himself and the satisfaction of his chief.

Long after he had resumed active service at sea —indeed throughout his subsequent career—Tryon remained on intimate terms with Mr Goschen, and often wrote to him on naval affairs. The ex-First Lord always expressed unbounded confidence in his judgment and *savoir faire*, while he also highly appreciated his social gifts and his vast store of amusing anecdotes of the sea.

CHAPTER VIII.

H.M.S. RALEIGH.

On the 13th January 1874 Captain Tryon commissioned the Raleigh at Chatham. He had been appointed to the depot ship Pembroke about a month before to superintend the fitting out of the Raleigh, in accordance with a rule to that effect which had been found to work well on several former occasions.

The Raleigh was the second type of the iron-built, wood-sheathed frigates, built on modern ideas, subdivided into compartments, with good speed, heavy armament, and intended to supersede the old wooden steam-frigates, such as the Immortalité, Ariadne, &c. The first type was represented by the Inconstant and Shah, and some naval officers thought these too large and too expensive. So the Raleigh was built 500 tons smaller, somewhat less speed, and a less powerful armament; but she conformed more to the naval ideas of what a cruiser ought to be. It is curious to look back to that period (only 1874) and to see how the naval architects were fettered in

their efforts to produce really useful steam-cruisers, by the irreducible condition that all cruisers must be able to sail well, and to tack and wear under all ordinary conditions of wind and weather. It was the fine old traditional seamanship idea—a right good old horse in his day, who did noble service to England: driven cruelly hard towards the end of his life, he died in harness; and there are some of his so-called friends and admirers flogging him now, trying to bring him to life again! Poor old horse, they cannot let his honoured remains rest in peace!

It is easy to be wise after the event, and to speculate on what the Raleigh might have been had sailing qualities been put more in the background; but in 1874, when she hoisted the pennant for her maiden commission, she was undeniably one of the finest cruisers afloat in the world, and a very proud command for Captain Tryon; and all his letters and reports upon her show that he *was* proud of her. She was first sent cruising by herself on the coast of Ireland to test her sailing qualities. She broke one blade of her screw during a steam trial, and cracked the other blade; but she was sent cruising without a screw. No doubt the authorities must have felt certain that she would not be wanted for service without plenty of warning.

Then when her sailing qualities had been thoroughly tested and pronounced satisfactory, she was ordered to join the Flying Squadron under

Admiral Randolph. The squadron consisted of the Narcissus (flag), Immortalité, Topaze, Doris, Newcastle, and Raleigh. The Raleigh was the biggest ship in the squadron, and the only one of her type, so her performances, compared with those of the other ships, were watched with keen interest. She was like the strange dog in the village, and, compared with her beautiful companions, she certainly was an "ugly duckling." But tastes alter, and ships with straight stems and new-fashioned sterns are not now considered ugly; though at the time the Raleigh was commissioned the naval eye had not yet got accustomed to the innovations of modern naval architecture. The Raleigh's stern was much the same as those of the old frigates, though her stem was straight, and she was painted black instead of the old "checker-sided," so dear to sailors; so she was—to say the least—peculiar.

The squadron went to the Cape of Good Hope, calling at various places, including Monte Video and the Falkland Islands. During their cruises the ships of the squadron were constantly tried as to their comparative speeds under sail. "Chase to windward" is the signal, and great is the excitement thereat, and great the efforts made by all on board to make the ship do her best and beat her consorts; and oh the shame and reproach of belonging to the "dummy" ship of the squadron, the one that is generally last! One would think from the general tone and bearing—sometimes patronising, sometimes contemptuous—with which they are

treated that the unfortunate officers and men who belong to the "dummy" ship had built the ship themselves, or at least committed some heinous sin, been guilty of some gross dereliction of duty, or some glaring blunder in seamanship, in that they have been unable to make their ship sail quite so fast as the other ships of the squadron. Undoubtedly a good deal depends on good handling, and careful and judicious trimming of the ship herself and of her sails, staying of the masts, and some other technical matters in seamanship which need not be dwelt upon; and some ships on changing captains have been known to improve greatly in their sailing qualities: but, on the other hand, there are some ships which the finest seamanship in the world will not make aught but "dummies."

It is hard to have the sins or shortcomings of the naval architects visited on the heads of the officers and crew of a slow-sailing ship, but so it always has been; and it is even carried to steaming qualities also, where all depends on the engineers and stokers and the makers of the engines. Why the doctor and the paymaster, for instance, who probably do not know a slide-valve from a piston-valve, should be made to feel somewhat humiliated because their ship cannot steam quite so fast as another one, is a riddle which is never likely to be solved.

The Raleigh turned out to be by far the best steamer in the Flying Squadron, as indeed she was bound to be with her modern engines and greater horse-power; and she also proved herself to be

about the second best sailer of the six ships. The Immortalité was indisputably the best sailer, and the Doris appears to have been generally the worst. Tryon's records and diagrams of the sailing trials are most elaborate, and are very interesting for a sailor to study, though they would scarcely be so to the general reader.

There can be no doubt that the success of the Raleigh as a sailing ship, compared with the old wooden frigates, was largely due to the infinite pains and trouble which Tryon took to make the most of her.

It was known as soon as the Raleigh was commissioned (and whilst still fitting out at Chatham) that she would be attached to the Flying Squadron, and tried on all points against the wooden frigates; and it was natural therefore that Tryon, with his great zeal and untiring energy, should do all in his power to make her a success.

The present Admiral A. K. Wilson was the officer chosen to be commander of the Raleigh under Tryon, and much of the actual executive work of fitting out devolved upon him, and he retains a vivid recollection of this period. He says: "Being a ship of a new class, there were a multitude of details connected with her outfit requiring to be settled, and into all these questions Captain Tryon threw himself with his accustomed ardour. No man understood better than he did how much the efficiency and smartness of a ship depends upon innumerable infinitely small and apparently trifling

details. So day after day, during the period of fitting out, the foreman in charge of the ship, and other dockyard officials, were asked to make some alteration or another, sometimes large, sometimes small, never without most careful consideration and discussion; but the requests, once made, were persisted in with a pertinacity that accepted no refusal."

The designs of the internal fittings, and all the numerous details of a ship's equipment, were not at this period so carefully and so accurately worked out as they are now, and even if this had been otherwise, it is certain that a ship of a new type would in any case be exceptional; and thus the Raleigh afforded a fine field for the exercise of originality: and suggestions, founded on a reasoned analogy of causes and effects, where a sound training in seamanship, joined to a progressive and unprejudiced mind, enabled an energetic officer like Tryon to overcome the "red tape" which binds all long-established services, and helped him to bring about permanent reforms in small but important details, which would long outlast the commission of the Raleigh, and be reproduced in ships of later types; and of these reforms and improvements Admiral Wilson gives numerous instances, which would scarcely interest the general reader, though of historical interest to naval officers.

One of Tryon's "fads" (as all innovations, whether good or bad, are irreverently called) was the institution of a "dry canteen" on board the Raleigh. She was one of the first sea-going ships that worked

this now common and popular institution. Tryon knew well how monotonous the diet on board a man-of-war becomes during a long sea cruise, and he was ever mindful of the comfort of his men when this could be attended to without hindrance to the service; and, in the case of the canteen, he always stoutly maintained that it increased the physical energy and efficiency of the ship's company. He used to have all hands weighed periodically, and attributed the increase in weight of the crew to the better feeding which the canteen afforded. Very probably he was right. The ship's companies of ships in former flying squadrons had been weighed, and had been found to have lost weight at the end of their sea cruising, thereby showing that they must have been underfed and overworked, as a considerable proportion of all ship's companies is composed of growing boys, who must increase in weight on any food at all. Therefore the men must have decreased largely in weight, and most probably in strength, as sailors do not, as a rule, suffer from undue obesity—at any rate, not before they join the coast-guard.

During the stay of the squadron at Monte Video all the ships lost some men by desertion, and the captain of the Raleigh and Captain Freemantle of the Doris put their heads together, and by the judicious arrangements they made for searching English merchant ships, they succeeded in recapturing a good many of their runaways.

Then the squadron went on to the Falkland

Islands, and while there Tryon had one of those sporting holidays so dear to his heart, which came occasionally to relieve the monotony of ship routine, courts-martial, examinations, and other somewhat dull and irksome duties which fall to the lot of the captain of a man-of-war.

The account of this trip will be best given in his own words, in a letter to his wife:—

"We got the loan of a large schooner, and part of the party, including Hume" (the captain of the Immortalité), "went round in her to another harbour. I and four others rode forty-six miles to a house, carrying blankets, &c., in which we slept; and next day rode another seven or eight miles, after a forenoon shooting, and joined the schooner, on board of which we lived for three days. Packe" (the principal landed proprietor in the islands) "was with the riding-party, and mounted me on a capital pony, with my saddle-bags, wallets, &c., which I had with me, and found most useful. We had excellent sport, which was not interfered with by bad weather. We killed 409 wild geese, 26 snipe, 80 teal, 8 guanacos, 9 duck, 4 oyster-birds, and 24 dotterel, an amount not often bagged in this wild country. We might have killed more geese had it not been for the difficulty of carrying them such a long way to the schooner. The guanacos are very wild animals, bigger than hinds, and something like small camels. We placed our guns in passes, and two men rode round and disturbed them. I got four to my rifle, one at 220 yards, of which I was

very proud. They travel very fast. The skins are used as carriage-rugs, and are very soft and nice.

"This was a great holiday for us. Our party from this ship was Lewis, Milne, Grant, and Quill, and from Hume's ship about the same number; but there was ample room for all. We enjoyed our trip immensely. It was a great holiday, and refreshed us much."

From the Falkland Islands the squadron went to the Cape of Good Hope, sailing nearly all the way with a strong fair wind.

The rivalry at drill aloft between the ships of a squadron, in the days of masts and sails, was extremely keen, even keener if possible than the rivalry at trials of sailing. "Those who have not seen men-of-war competing in exercises aloft can have no conception of the excitement of the scene, or how much depends on the quickness of eye and instant decision of the officer carrying on. The multitude of ropes which have to be worked at the same time, or in rapid succession; the importance of even a second, in detecting the right moment to give the orders to pull up or lower a rope as a spar is swinging with the roll of the ship, or a sail is flapping in the breeze; the combined sharpness of eye and knowledge required to detect instantly amongst the maze of ropes aloft what is jammed or foul, and what order is necessary to clear it; the judgment necessary to apportion the right number of men to each rope in the ever-varying conditions of the work; and above all, the knowledge that a

rope held on too long or let go too soon may easily cause a fatal accident,—all combine to render the task of the commander, or officer of the watch carrying on, during competitive exercise aloft, a very difficult one, so that even the best man must sometimes be open to the criticism of an interested spectator; who, like the looker-on at all games, is apt to see the defects and overlook the difficulties."

Thus writes the officer who was commander of the Raleigh, and who was a good judge of the subject; and he adds that "Captain Tryon, with his keen ambition which could not brook defeat, and with his somewhat overbearing manner, was especially trying to the officers of the watches, who at times felt his irritating interference to be almost unbearable; but his obvious ability, his perfect impartiality, and, above all, the feeling that his interference arose solely from his eagerness for the credit of the ship, went far to reconcile them to it, so that few felt any permanent ill-will towards him."

The squadron arrived at the Cape of Good Hope on the 6th March 1875, and after a stay there of about a fortnight the Raleigh was ordered to take Sir Garnet Wolseley and all his staff to Natal. Some of them were old friends of Tryon's, and in spite of head-winds and bad weather they had a pleasant trip.

While in the Raleigh, Tryon wrote a thoughtful letter to the Admiralty (through his Admiral in the

usual manner) on the subject of desertions in the Royal Navy. It seems that the Raleigh lost thirty men by desertion before she left England, and she also lost some men at Monte Video. 'Instead of proposing to increase the punishment for desertion, Tryon takes rather the opposite view of the case, and suggests that it would be a good plan to leave the door more open for the return of men who sometimes desert in a fit of spleen or thoughtlessness. He recognises that a good many men who desert are a good riddance to the service, and these he would by no means allow to return; but, on the other hand, he considers that many good men desert in a huff, or in a temporary fit of discontent, or (very commonly, as he thinks) from domestic troubles, from having formed some undesirable and embarrassing connection that they want to get clear of, and very often—he thinks—these are some of the best men in the ship, and that they would gladly come back again, to the great benefit of the service, were they not afraid of the consequences in the shape of the severe penalties attached to the crime of desertion. It is scarcely necessary to say that Tryon's suggestions for leniency in this respect were only intended for a time of peace, and he would by no means have modified the extreme penalty for desertion in time of war.

After landing Sir Garnet Wolseley and his staff at Natal, the Raleigh returned to the Cape, to find that the squadron had sailed. She followed them, and caught them up at St Helena. The squadron

then continued its cruising, and went to Ascension, St Vincent, and Gibraltar. At the latter place there was a change of admirals. Admiral Randolph went home, and Admiral Rowley Lambert took command of the squadron; and shortly afterwards orders were received for the squadron to proceed to Bombay, for the purpose of receiving the Prince of Wales, who was about to make his grand tour through India.

On this second passage out to the Cape the Raleigh rescued a man who had fallen overboard, under circumstances of exceptional difficulty. The commander of the Raleigh (A. K. Wilson) gives the following graphic description of the rescue—a rescue which will call forth the admiration of all seamen, and which even landsmen will not fail to appreciate, although they may find some difficulty in picturing to themselves the suppressed excitement, the suspense, and the acute tension of alternate hope and fear with which a whole ship's company is possessed during the trying interval between the cry of "Man overboard!" and the time (sometimes hours) when the man is picked up, and the boat safely hoisted up again; or, as sometimes happens, alas! not only the man overboard, but the whole boat's crew, lost:—

"On the passage out, while running down the westerly winds towards the Cape of Good Hope, an able seaman named Walter Gatfield fell overboard from the forecastle hammock-netting. The ship was running at the rate of eleven knots, under

double-reefed top-sails, with the wind on the starboard quarter, and a very heavy sea. For a moment it seemed doubtful whether a boat could live in such a sea; but the man was seen to be swimming strongly as he passed the stern, and it seemed worth incurring the risk to try and save him.

"The lifeboat was manned instantly, and the helm put down to heave the ship to: the smallest midshipman in the ship, Mr Warrender, promptly jumped into the lifeboat to take charge of her; but he was called out to make room for Lieutenant Kingscote. While the ship was coming to the wind the boat's crew were made to put on their cork-jackets, and ropes' ends were thrown over the quarter for them to get hold of in case the boat was smashed alongside. The ship was fortunately remarkably steady, and the boat was lowered and slipped without difficulty; but as she dropped astern she was sucked under the counter and bound hard against the ship's side for a few seconds, during which it looked as if she must be capsized. The efforts of the men, however, and the lift of the sea, threw her clear before any harm was done, and once clear of the ship, she had little difficulty in reaching and picking up the man, who was holding on to the life-buoy. In the meantime, however, the ship was drifting fast to leeward, and it would have been extremely dangerous for the boat to turn round and pull down to her with the sea astern; so the sails were filled,

yards braced sharp up, and top-gallant-sails and jib set (though it was doubtful whether they would stand) to try and get to windward. With such a heavy sea on it was impossible to tack, and wearing involved a great loss of ground; moreover, it was not safe to stand on far on one tack, for fear of losing sight of the boat. Fortunately under the heavy press of sail she was carrying the ship wore remarkably quickly, though, under ordinary conditions, she was very slow in wearing. After wearing the second time she just fetched to windward of the boat, which was then hoisted safely without much difficulty. Captain Tryon was so pleased with the result of this accident that he had a picture painted of the event, and gave a photographic copy of it to every officer in the ship."

Thus writes the commander of the Raleigh, who modestly says nothing about his own share in this successful piece of seamanship; though, as all the executive orders in the working of a man-of-war are given by the commander, it is not too much to say that, next to the captain, the success of such an evolution depends upon the skill, nerve, and good judgment of the executive officer.

Tryon received the warmest congratulations both from Admiral Rowley Lambert and from his brother captains; and he deserved them, for success depended upon good seamanship, prompt decision, sound judgment, and a highly disciplined crew.

After a long passage to Bombay the squadron

arrived there a few days before the Prince of Wales, in time to take part in the festivities attending his reception.

The Prince went out to Bombay in the Serapis, attended by the royal yacht Osborne, and was received there by Admiral Macdonald, commanding the East Indian station, and Admiral Rowley Lambert with his flying squadron of six frigates, of which the Raleigh was one.

The Prince's reception in India was a very hearty one, both by the English residents and also by the natives of all ranks; and he quickly won for himself golden opinions, as he invariably does, by his charming manners, his high courtesy, and his kindly consideration for others. Tryon mentions an instance of the last in one of his letters. It appears that the Prince was to dine in the caves of Elephanta, one of those remarkable and interesting rock excavations on an island about six miles from the town of Bombay. It was dark, and there was to be a grand illumination of all the ships in the harbour as the Prince steamed down to the island. The Governor of Bombay had invited a large party to meet his Royal Highness at the caves, and another steamer was provided for their conveyance. The Prince with his immediate staff embarked first; but as he knew that the illuminations would take place directly he started, he would not allow his steamer to cross the harbour until all the Governor's guests were embarked, and he waited for more than an hour in order that they might not miss the illuminations.

These illuminations are described as being very magnificent. Quantities of fireworks were sent out from England in order that the men-of-war should bear a leading part in them, and the captains of the different ships vied with each other as to who should make the grandest and most effective display. Tryon's special hobby was bouquets of rockets, and he had elaborate arrangements for the simultaneous ignition of a hundred and two hundred at a time—not such an easy thing to do safely in a rigged ship, with spars and sails all ready to catch fire. On one occasion one of these bouquets of rockets did go off prematurely on board the Raleigh, notwithstanding they were all covered over with a damp tarpaulin: the mizen-top-sail and the spanker caught fire; but, thanks to the careful preparations which had been made in view of the probability of such an event, the fire was quickly extinguished, and very little harm done.

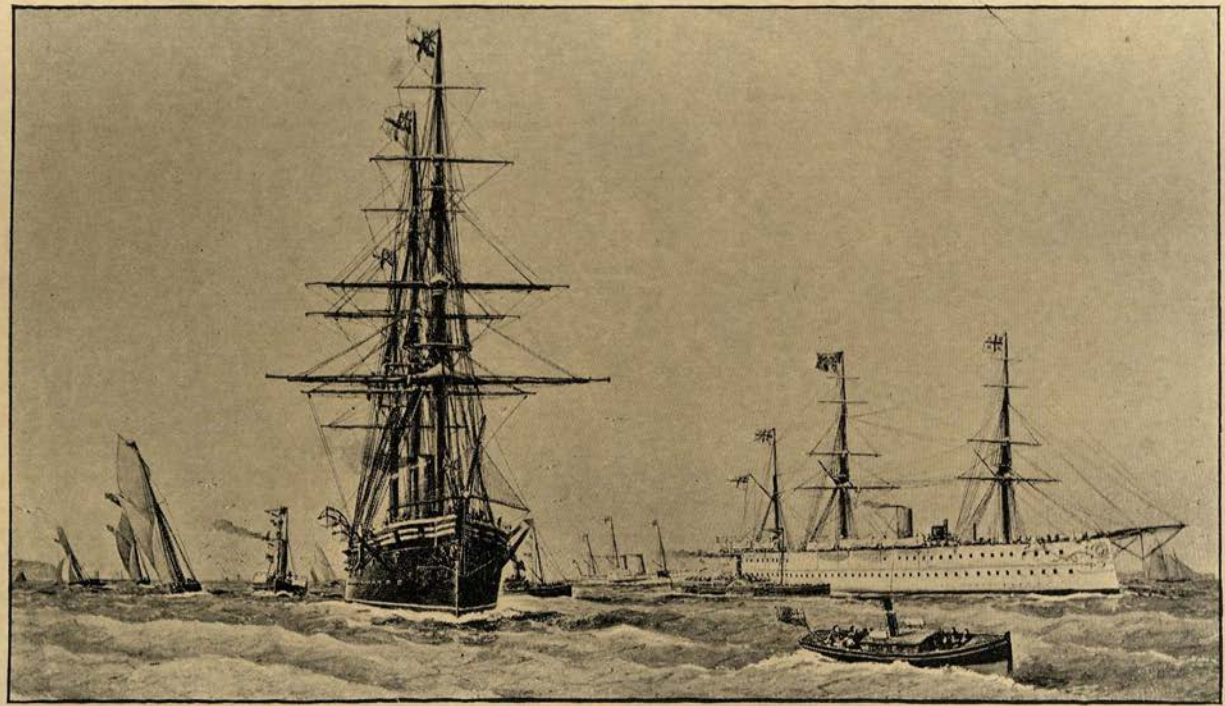
Tryon went up country as far as Delhi, and then returned to his ship. Then the Prince came back to Bombay, and there were more illuminations and more festivities. Then he embarked on board the Serapis to go to Ceylon and Calcutta, calling at Goa and Beypore; and great must have been Tryon's joy, and pride in his ship, when it was announced that, as the Raleigh was the only ship out of the two squadrons that was fast enough to keep up with the Serapis and the Osborne, she was ordered to accompany and escort them during the remainder of the Prince's cruise in Indian waters. During this

cruise Tryon was called upon to accommodate a whole army of newspaper correspondents, which he did to the best of his ability, quartering them under the poop.

The royal squadron visited the old Portuguese settlement of Goa, and then Beypore, and went on to Colombo, where the Prince landed from the Serapis, and after paying a short visit in Ceylon, he crossed the straits to the mainland and went to Madras, where the Raleigh—after coaling at Trincomalee—was just in time to meet him and salute him. The Prince then embarked again on board the Serapis, and, accompanied by the Raleigh, steamed up to Calcutta; but the Raleigh was not allowed to go up the Hoogly. Our foreign relations were at this period somewhat strained, and it was not considered wise to allow such an efficient ship to get into a river from which she could only get out at spring-tides —so she was forbidden (by orders from home) to go up; and after giving the Serapis three hearty cheers off the "Sand Heads," and the exchange of some complimentary signals, she returned to Trincomalee to coal, and then went to Bombay, ready to escort the Prince home to England through the Suez Canal on the completion of his Indian tour.

While coaling and refitting at Trincomalee, Tryon went out elephant-shooting and bagged an elephant.

During the Prince's Indian tour he received from various native potentates a large number of presents, and amongst them there were included numerous wild beasts, and these were sent down to Bombay



H.M. SHIPS RALEIGH AND SERAPIS.

to be embarked on board the Raleigh for passage to England. They were accommodated under the poop, where the newspaper correspondents had been, and they became a considerable source of amusement and some anxiety to those who had to take care of them. There were two full-grown tigers, named Moody and Sankey, and a full-grown leopard called Jummoo, and a large number of smaller and less formidable creatures, including a good many birds. No natives were sent with the beasts, and four sailors of the Raleigh had entire charge of them. Mr Bartley of the Zoological Gardens sent out written instructions as to feeding, care, &c.

Then it was announced that a gigantic elephant was coming down, and Tryon was much exercised in his mind as to how he was to be safely hoisted in, and properly accommodated when he was on board; but, much to his relief, the great beast absolutely refused to enter the train at Delhi, and therefore could not be got down in time.

Most of the animals became fairly tame during the passage home: but there was one thing they never got accustomed to, and that was the saluting with the big guns; on these occasions they howled piteously, and showed great terror. The illuminations also greatly frightened and disturbed them. Probably they thought the jungle was on fire.

The royal squadron, consisting of the Serapis, Osborne, and Raleigh, sailed from Bombay homeward bound on the 13th March 1876. The Flying Squadron, with the exception of the Doris, sailed for

China; the Raleigh's connection with it came to an end, and she subsequently joined the Mediterranean fleet.

The passage home to England *viâ* the Suez Canal was made at full speed; but the Raleigh was able to keep up with the Serapis and Osborne. The Prince spent some days at Alexandria, Malta, Gibraltar, and Lisbon, visiting neighbouring places of interest, and the squadron arrived at Portsmouth on the 11th of May. The Raleigh was sent in to Ushant, as the squadron was passing, to signal their arrival in the Channel, and this being telegraphed home to England, the Princess of Wales and her daughters were enabled to meet and board the Serapis at the Needles, and give the Prince a welcome home to his native land. The Osborne steamed through the Solent with an elephant standing on each paddle-box.

The squadron were all berthed alongside Portsmouth dockyard: the Royal party landed, and after the necessary arrangements had been made, the Raleigh discharged her wild beasts.

Tryon received the Prince's warmest approval of the manner in which his ship had performed her escort duties; and thus ended the first and most eventful period of the Raleigh's commission.

After a thorough refit she was sent to strengthen the Mediterranean Squadron. Affairs in the East were looking critical, and the everlasting Eastern question was in one of its acute stages. The Turk was once more in trouble with the Christian inhabi-

tants of his European provinces. The Great Bear watched anxiously for another opportunity to advance towards Constantinople, in accordance with his traditional policy, and in pursuance of his "obvious destiny." England watched jealously over what she is in the habit of describing as her interests in the East, and kept her Mediterranean fleet in the Levant, close to the entrance of the Dardanelles, so as to be ready for all emergencies. Austria was uneasy—Greece restless. All Europe offered gratuitous advice to the Turk, who as usual was polite but stubborn; asked leave to be allowed to manage his own affairs in his own way (which is just exactly what Europe objects to, as it insists that his ways are barbarous and uncivilised), and finally trusted to the mutual jealousies of his mentors to save him from being subjected to the "bag-and-baggage" treatment prescribed for him by some of his so-called allies.

So the autumn of 1876 found Tryon once more at Bashika Bay; and he looked back to the time, twenty-two years ago, when he was there as a midshipman in a sailing line-of-battle ship, on the eve of the Crimean war, during another of the acute stages of the Eastern question. He thinks that now at any rate the Turk's hour has come, and that he will have to disappear off the European stage; but in this opinion he is wrong, or at any rate premature, as so many have been before him; and the Turk still goes on, and very much on his old ways.

Tryon's practical mind notes the remarkable

difference in the health of the crews of the ships lying at Bashika Bay now and in 1853; and he ascribes the great improvement to the fact that now the ships distil all their fresh water, and that at the earlier date they obtained their water from the shore, and as a consequence suffered much from fever and other complaints.

The latter period of the Raleigh's commission, which was spent almost entirely in the Levant, was not particularly eventful—for although there was a good deal of diplomatic tension amongst the Great Powers with regard to the Eastern question, and for some time the possibility, and occasionally the probability, of England being dragged into a war, yet she managed to steer clear of it; and the constant watching and waiting, and the frequent trips between Bashika Bay, Smyrna, Thaso, Salonica, and back again, became extremely monotonous, and Tryon's letters show that he was getting very tired of it, and would have been glad of any change; but his sense of duty kept him where he was.

He managed also to find plenty of occupation, in addition to his ordinary routine duties. He explored the antiquities of Ephesus, Sardis, Philadelphia, and many other places of interest, and also managed to get away for a few days' shooting on one or two occasions. He was always a keen sportsman, and never missed an opportunity when one offered. On one occasion when the Raleigh was at Adalia he went up into the mountains after ibex, and succeeded in getting one with a

fine head, of which he was very proud; but the expedition which he seemed to have enjoyed most, and which he loved to talk about in after-years, was an expedition to Ayas Bay, that sportsman's paradise, as it has been very properly called, and where the present writer spent some happy weeks. The Raleigh was sent to provision and store the Torch, a small gun-vessel stationed on the coast of Syria, and the rendezvous was Ayas Bay. The Torch was at the time commanded by a famous shekaree, Captain R. Hamond, who knew the country well, and was prepared to make the most of his opportunities; so it may well be imagined that when Tryon and Hamond got together they had a good time amongst the wild boar, the woodcock, and the francolin, in the happy hunting-grounds on the banks of the Jahun river.

In October of this year (1876) her Royal and Imperial Highness the Duchess of Edinburgh arrived at Smyrna in the Russian Imperial yacht Livadia; she was *en route* to Malta to spend the winter there, the Duke at this time being in command of H.M.S. Sultan stationed in the Mediterranean.

A Russian squadron commanded by an admiral met the Livadia at Smyrna to do honour to the Duchess; there were also representative ships of all nations assembled there for the same purpose, and amongst them the Raleigh. There were salutes and illuminations, at which the Raleigh, having had plenty of practice in India, made a good show,

though Tryon admits that the Russians did theirs on a grander scale, doubtless having come fully prepared for it. But if he was beaten at illuminating, he was amply revenged next day, when he had one of those opportunities, so dear to his heart, of showing off the qualities of the ship he was so proud of. The Gulf of Smyrna is a stretch of narrow water about thirty miles long, leading out from the town of Smyrna to the open sea, and it was arranged that the Russian squadron and the Raleigh were to escort the Duchess in the Livadia thus far on her voyage to Malta.

Off went the Livadia at full speed, but the Raleigh kept her station (two cables on the starboard quarter) accurately. Not so, though, the Russian squadron, for in a very short time they were all "hull down" astern, and the Raleigh was the sole escort! Then when the entrance to the Gulf was reached the Duchess requested that a courteous signal should be made to Captain Tryon thanking him for his attendance and begging that he would not come any farther out of his way: so Tryon prepared to "part company"; but before doing so he called upon his chief engineer to make an effort and put on a spurt. The latter responded; up rushed the Raleigh close alongside the Livadia; the ship's company manned the rigging and gave three hearty cheers, and the Raleigh sheered off and went on her way. Squibs, crackers, and rockets were eclipsed: this was the real thing,—one of the leading factors of modern naval efficiency demon-

strated; Britannia was justified of her stokers; and Tryon was happy.

In June of the following year (1877) Tryon, having been three and a half years in command of the Raleigh, was relieved by Captain Jago, and went home *viâ* Corfu and Venice. He left the Raleigh with very mixed feelings: he was certainly tired of the Levant, and was very anxious to get home to his wife and his little son; but yet it was a wrench for him to give up the command of a ship that he was so proud of, one that he had handled with so much credit to himself and to the service, and to sever his connection (perhaps for ever) with officers and men who had participated with him, and helped him so loyally, in the many interesting and eventful services which the Raleigh had been employed upon during the last three and a half years. He also thought at this time that war was more than probable, and that if it broke out soon after he left the Raleigh he would be appointed to a newly commissioned ship with an untrained crew, instead of commanding his well trained and well tried Raleighs.

The final parting between a captain and a ship's company and officers that have served together through an eventful commission, and who, according to the popular expression, have "pulled well together," is always a sad business; and the knowledge that in all probability the majority will never meet again on this side of the great river makes it additionally so.

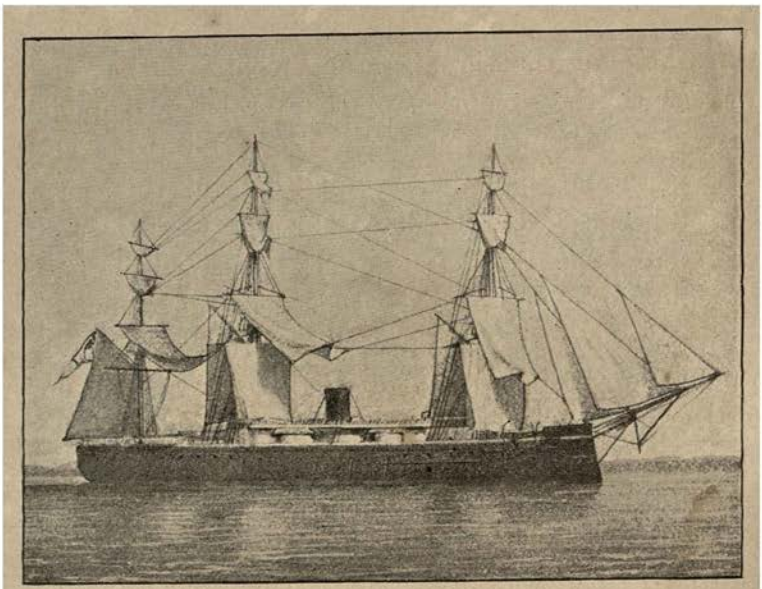
Tryon was a good speaker, and possessed of a ready wit, but on this occasion his heart was too full to speak, so he wrote the following, which was duly posted up on the men's mess-deck :—

"I wish to write what it would have been difficult for me to say: it is 'Good-bye' to a ship's company with whom I have been associated for three and a half years, and to wish all and every individual long life and happiness; and that in years to come, when they look back and recall the time we served together in the Raleigh, it may be with as kindly a reminiscence of their captain as I shall through my life retain for them.

"G. TRYON."

The officers of the Raleigh gave Tryon a farewell complimentary dinner the night before he left the ship, at Athens. "A big affair on the upper deck, under awnings, &c. All very nice in tone and feeling," he says, in a letter to his wife. He then embarked on board a Greek steamer for Corfu, in company with his friend Captain Richards, who was also on his way home, having been relieved from the command of the Devastation. At Corfu they got an Italian steamer for Venice, and went home overland *viâ* Paris; but on the journey between Venice and Paris Captain Richards was taken ill with fever and had to stop in Paris. Tryon was in a great hurry to get home to his wife and his little boy, from whom he had been separated

so long; but he would not leave his friend alone, even in civilised Paris, and he stayed with him several days, until he was well enough to travel. It must have been most tantalising to be so near home, and then to be obliged to stop; but he never had any hesitation as to where his duty lay, and that to him was law. Captain Richards (now Admiral Sir Frederick Richards) has grateful recollections of the kind and attentive way in which Tryon nursed him until he was well enough to travel. Captain and Mrs Tryon had only one child, the boy alluded to above, now an officer in the Grenadier Guards.



H.M.S. Monarch.

CHAPTER IX.

H.M.S. MONARCH.

FROM June 1877 until October 1878 Tryon remained on shore, enjoying some well-earned rest, and seeing his friends, though it was only for six months of this time that he was left absolutely free to follow his own devices; for in January he was appointed by the Admiralty to sit on a committee for the revision of the general signal-book, the manual of fleet evolutions, the night and fog signal-book, and the army and navy signal-book—in fact,

the whole of the signal arrangements of the services, with the exception of the vocabulary signal-book.

The gradual change from sail to steam which has been taking place in the navy during the last fifty years has rendered it necessary to revise from time to time the evolutionary signal-books, and this has always been intrusted to a committee of officers who have shown special intelligence and aptitude for the work. The other members of the committee on this occasion were Rear-Admiral C. W. Hope (president), Captain Colomb, Captain Lord Walter Kerr, and Commanders Bruce and Romilly. The two latter had wide experience as flag-lieutenants. Colomb had made a deep study of the subject of fleet tactics and the manœuvring power of ships, and had mapped it all out on paper. Tryon represented the practical side of the question, as distinguished from the theoretical side of it. His mind was always eminently practical. He believed greatly in the training of the eye, to judge distance and speed, as the foundation of all successful fleet manœuvres. It was a strong committee. Colomb and Tryon represented somewhat divergent views with regard to the theory and practice of steam tactics, and Lord Walter Kerr and Admiral Hope held the balance.

The work of this committee in revising the signal-books was not final — in fact, it is impossible to imagine anything connected with naval matters as being final, we go ahead so fast in the present day.

But it was a reform, and led to further improvements. It may be regarded as one of those great, silent, unadvertised naval reforms, alluded to in an earlier chapter, in many of which Tryon took so prominent a part, and left upon them the mark of his individuality.

Tryon was appointed to the Monarch on the 1st October 1878, and assumed command of her on the 18th November at Artaki, in the Sea of Marmora. The British Mediterranean fleet had passed through the Dardanelles, and thus got within striking distance of Constantinople, as a reply to the Russian successes in the Balkan Peninsula and the advance of the Czar's troops on the Turkish capital.

It was felt that if the Russians could once seize the Bulair Peninsula the Dardanelles would be in their power: they would be masters of the situation, and England would be powerless to check them with her fleet, or to safeguard her own interests in the East. A powerful British squadron was therefore kept in the Gulf of Xeros, and another at Gallipoli—that is to say, one on each side of the narrowest part of the peninsula which forms the northern shore of the Dardanelles—so that an invading army could scarcely have passed out of gunshot of the ships, and would have been unable to throw up any formidable fortifications, or, indeed, to have maintained their position in the presence of a hostile fleet.

It is not proposed to enter into the subject of the very important part which the British fleet

played in checking the Russians, and in modifying the treaty of San Stefano, notwithstanding that it did not fire a shot or commit a hostile act, unless the passage of the Dardanelles (where it went to help the "sick man" against his will) can be so described. It is enough to say that Tryon took command of the Monarch at a time when there was considerable international tension, and it was felt in England, and well known in the fleet, that we might be at war with Russia any day, and not impossibly with Russia and Turkey combined—for it was not certain what the Turks might do in their desperation, since England had not actively joined them against their hereditary foe.

The moral effect of the presence of the British fleet in the Sea of Marmora was undoubtedly very great; but the business was settled without giving Admiral Hornby an opportunity of proving the quality of his ironclads and the training and discipline of their crews.

During the period of greatest tension the British squadron was kept in the eastern basin of the Sea of Marmora, either at the anchorage at Prince's Islands, close to Constantinople, or in the Gulf of Ismid.

One of Tryon's earliest duties after he joined the squadron was to sit on the court of inquiry upon the bursting of the Thunderer's gun. On the 2d of January 1879, while the squadron was exercising at target practice in the Gulf of Ismid, one of the Thunderer's 38-ton turret-guns burst with disastrous

consequences, killing seven, and wounding, more or less severely, thirty-six officers and men. The loss of life, and the maiming of so many trained men, was in itself sufficiently deplorable; but far worse was the loss of confidence entailed by the failure of a gun which, although at that period the heaviest afloat, was of similar design and construction to the guns with which the whole of our most modern ironclads were armed.

Subsequently it was proved that the gun had been double-loaded—a condition which would have burst any heavy rifled gun of the period. This was demonstrated in a very practical manner, by double-loading a precisely similar gun (of course under safe conditions at the proof-butts), when the second gun burst almost exactly in the same way. Both guns may now be seen lying side by side in Woolwich Arsenal.

There was a fierce controversy at the time amongst the experts as to the cause of the bursting of the gun, some holding that it was practically impossible that the gun could have been double-loaded without the knowledge of the gun's crew; but the possible eccentricities of hydraulic rammers, and the practical demonstration with the second gun, left no doubt in the minds of unprejudiced naval gunners as to the cause of the accident. However, in the meantime, and until this practical and convincing demonstration took place some months afterwards, the moral effect of the loss of confidence in the principal weapons with

which our fleet was armed was a very serious matter.

The Thunderer was sent to Malta; and not long afterwards the diplomatic tension in the East was relieved, and in March the British squadron withdrew from the Sea of Marmora.

During the summer of 1879 the Monarch, in company with the squadron, cruised in the Levant, visiting many places of interest, including Cyprus, of which island of the gods Great Britain had lately acquired the tenant-right, and great things were expected of it. Ten thousand British troops were to be stationed there. First-class hotels were to be built. It was to become the great health-resort of the East, besides being a new market for British manufactures. Of course Lord Wolseley was sent out as the first Governor and Administrator and Commander-in-Chief; but he soon gave place to a lesser star. The present writer was in the Levant at the time, and remembers—amongst other luxuries—the landing of a considerable number of English billiard-tables, intended, no doubt, for the recreation of the 10,000 troops. But, alas! these rosy anticipations have not been quite realised; for whatever the salubrity and fertility of the island may have been in classic days, or even later, when the Moor of Venice was Governor, Administrator, and Commander-in-Chief, it is now, for at least half the year, a sun-baked desert—in fact, very like a slice out of the adjacent shores of the Promised Land, which appears equally to have changed its character, since

three thousand years ago it flowed with milk and honey.

Tryon in the Monarch saw a good deal of Cyprus, and with the eye of a sailor he seems from the first to have formed rather a low estimate of its value to England, with its harbourless shores and insalubrious climate. He also visited his old happy hunting-grounds in the Gulf of Scanderoon and the southern shores of Asia Minor, and sent home, through his admiral, some very interesting reports on the state of the country and the condition and prospects of the inhabitants.

These were the days of the British military vice-consuls in Asia Minor, and they were expected to effect great reforms—to see the Asia Minor clause of the treaty of Berlin carried out, and to teach that incorrigible old sinner the Grand Turk how to govern his Christian subjects. They were, as a rule, young men of great ability and unbounded zeal and energy: they were filled with good intentions, and spared no pains to fulfil their mission; but they had a hard nut to crack, and recent events would seem to indicate that the task of reforming the Turk—that is to say, the governing Turk—is absolutely hopeless, so that his best friends in England, and he still has some, are almost in despair about him.

Tryon was not content with merely lying at anchor and listening to the seaport gossip of the places he visited, but made long expeditions inland, visiting and exchanging courtesies with the *valis*

of various towns, and thus acquiring much useful information which he could not otherwise have gained. He was always fond of riding, and as there are no carriage-roads and very few wheeled vehicles in these parts, he was able to take his favourite exercise and combine business with pleasure. On these expeditions he was often accompanied by one of his officers; and the Hon. Maurice Bourke, who was then one of his lieutenants and afterwards became his flag-captain, was frequently his companion. He found coal near the small town of Ayas in the Gulf of Scanderoon, close to the seashore, and he sent home specimens of it; yet for some unexplained reason this potential source of wealth still remains undeveloped. The Turk always had, and still seems to have, an instinctive objection to other people digging on his property; and even the insatiable British lust for digging up classic marbles has a ruffling and disturbing influence on his placid mind, and he never fails to regard it with suspicion.

Amongst the duties assigned to Tryon whilst cruising in these waters was that of making all the necessary arrangements for the transportation to the coast of some of these same classic marbles, which had been "acquired" by the British Museum, but were far inland, somewhere near Aleppo, with no road, nothing but a bridle-path, to bring them down by. A long correspondence took place between Tryon and the British consul at Aleppo, in which the former showed his

practical knowledge of the ways and means of moving heavy weights with primitive and extemporised appliances.

The commission of the Monarch was on the whole an uneventful one; and not until quite the close of it did Tryon have any opportunity of exhibiting those qualities of rapid insight into difficult and delicate subjects, and the power of mastering quickly the main issues, and then of dealing with them with great tact and firmness, which gained for him the confidence of the admirals under whom he served,—so that whenever there was a particularly hard nut to crack, Tryon seems to have been selected to crack it. This opportunity came in the summer of 1881, in connection with what was generally known as the Sfax affair, when the French bombarded the town of Sfax, on the coast of Tunis, and Tryon was chosen to look after British interests on that coast.

In March 1880 Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby—who at this time, and until the day of his death, was regarded as not only the ablest, but probably also the most universally beloved and respected, officer in the British navy—was relieved as Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean station by Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour (afterwards Lord Alcester).

In the summer of 1880 Sir Beauchamp took his squadron for a cruise on the coast of Italy and the Riviera, visiting Spezzia, Genoa, Villa Franca, Hyères, Palermo, and Messina. He then sent the

Monarch to Naples, accompanied by the Thunderer, to do honour to the King of Italy, who came there to launch the great battleship Italia, at that time the largest man-of-war in the world.

Tryon had the knack of doing this kind of thing well, and always with a certain amount of *éclat*. His official report of his proceedings to his Commander-in-Chief runs as follows:—

"His Majesty arrived" (at Castellamare) "by train a little after noon on the 29th, when the ships saluted and dressed, &c. The launch took place at 2.35; immediately after which the king embarked on board the Stafetta and proceeded to Naples, escorted by Vice-Admiral Martini with his flag in the Principe Amadeo, and with the Maria Pia, one ship on either quarter of the royal yacht. I took my station astern of the admiral, and placed the Thunderer astern of the Maria Pia. After proceeding a short distance, his Majesty signalled to his admiral — by the commercial code—'Give place to English ships.' The Italian ships then placed themselves astern of the Monarch and Thunderer. I closed the ships to one cable so as to narrow the front, and when close off the Mole, and close to the royal yacht as she rounded it, by a rectangular movement to starboard I cleared out of the way of the Italian ironclads, cheered his Majesty on turning, and then the Italian squadron as we passed them.

"So soon as we anchored, his Majesty sent an aide-de-camp to express his satisfaction. Captain

Colomb and I had the honour of dining with the king the same evening, and he paid several compliments to the two ships, to which I replied I was sure they would be received by my Commander-in-Chief with great satisfaction."

In the autumn of this year (1880) the Commander-in-Chief in the Alexandra, with the Monarch and three small ships, went to Cattaro to take part in an international demonstration against the Turks about the Dulcigno affair; but as Tryon was in company with the Admiral, and consequently had no responsibility in that matter, it is unnecessary to enter into the merits of it here. His opportunity came later, when he was sent down to the coast of Tunis as senior officer in May 1881 —as above mentioned—and remained there in that capacity until November, during which period the disturbance, and all that arose out of it, known as the Sfax affair, took place: and Tryon on that occasion, by the exercise of great tact and courtesy, combined with firmness, and a remarkable impartiality of judgment, won for himself universal confidence amongst the most hostile and conflicting interests; steered clear of international complications and difficulties in a very magazine of high explosives, and an atmosphere charged with electricity; and finally received the warm and well-merited approval of his own admiral—who trusted him implicitly—and also of the Admiralty and the Foreign Office, for his judicious management of the many complicated questions that he was called upon to deal with on

his own responsibility. One of the first of these was a case of the illegal boarding and search of two British schooners by the French gunboat Leopard off the coast of Tunis, there being no declared blockade, and France not being at war with any one. With injudicious handling this might have been the cause of much unpleasantness and irritation, if not of more serious consequences; but Tryon seems to have recognised from the first that it was merely the unauthorised act of an over-zealous young officer burning to distinguish himself: he therefore went at once to the senior French naval officer on the coast (Captain Rieunnier) and pointed out to him firmly but courteously that this was a breach of international etiquette, which it was to be hoped would be disowned, and an apology offered for it. Captain Rieunnier, being a sensible man, took the same view of the case. The young officer was told not to do it again; it was explained that it was a mistake and unauthorised, and that the commander of the Leopard had misunderstood his instructions; and thus the affair was settled without going any further, and without any unnecessary fuss about it, to the satisfaction of all concerned, with the possible exception of the officer whose excessive zeal was peremptorily checked.

The Leopard affair was a clear indication that the coming trouble was not unexpected by the French, for the two schooners were boarded on the supposition that they were carrying gunpowder or other warlike stores to one of the towns on the east

coast of Tunis — a perfectly legitimate business under the circumstances.

The following brief description of the immediate cause (which, however, was merely the spark to the magazine) of the Sfax trouble is given by an officer of the Monarch, Captain R. A. Marriott of the Royal Marine Artillery, who, being a good French and Italian scholar, subsequently acted as Tryon's secretary on the Sfax Commission. He says: "The real origin of the revolt at Sfax against the Dey's authority was the conduct of an artillery officer who had been regularly drawing pay for the men of his battery, and being called upon to take his battery somewhere to co-operate with the French in quelling the rising disturbances amongst the Bedawin of the south of Tunis. The officer, being far removed from the central authority at Tunis, had seen fit to dismiss his men to their homes, and to pocket their pay. Finding himself in a fix, he thought to withdraw attention from himself by raising the cry of 'Jehad' (holy war) in the town of Sfax. The people took it up in a half-hearted way, thinking it would be a good opportunity to vent their spite against the French consul, M. Mattei; and a mob, composed mostly of boys, armed with sticks and iron hoops, sallied out with the cry of 'Jehad!' and mobbed the French consulate and maltreated some of the staff. The Maltese, Jews, and Greeks took fright, and escaped in boats as fast as they could, remaining at anchor in the bay. The Sfaxians, when their little joke was over, entreated them to

return, but to no purpose. The Bedawin in the meantime came into the town and excited the people in real earnest against any foreign interference; and the resistance against the approach of the French was thus begun."

The condition of the Tunisian territory was at this time peculiar. There was the vague and shadowy suzerainty of the Sultan; the weak and corrupt administration and executive of the nominal ruler, the Dey; and the actual and potential (though not always very visible) power of France, to dictate to the nominal ruler the whole course of his policy, both home and foreign. Then, as a further disturbing element, there was the very mixed nature of the population,—the peace-loving Moors of the towns; the warlike and turbulent Arabs of the country; and finally the aliens—the Maltese, Jews, and Greeks, in whose hands rested the principal part of the trade of the country, and to whom the property of the natives was in many cases heavily mortgaged in the shape of *adoul*. *Adoul* (which is a plural word) are legalised promises to pay, or I O U. And some of the principal claims for compensation which came before the Sfax Commission were in the shape of supposed losses of these *adoul*.

The Sfaxian revolt, which had its origin in the riot got up by the defaulting artillery colonel, soon took the form of an avowed rebellion against the Dey's authority, on the ground that he had sold the country to the French. Very probably he had;

but at any rate he could say that he was not the first nominal ruler who had done the same thing; nor was France the first buyer. England at any rate could scarcely afford to throw stones.

One of the most remarkable features of the Sfax revolt—considering the circumstances under which it took place, and the lawless and fanatical nature of the forces let loose—was the order and good government maintained in the town during the time it was in rebellion, by a man named Camoum, who was elected civil governor, and by all accounts administered the strictest and most impartial justice, sternly repressing all pillage, and locking up and sealing the houses and property of the Maltese, Jews, and Greeks who had taken refuge in flight, and who spent many days in open boats at anchor a mile from the shore, until sufficient shipping accommodation arrived to remove them.

After the flight of the Jews and Christians, the killing (apparently accidental) of a Maltese, and the ill-treatment of the French consul and his staff, the town was governed by Camoum, the proper governor having also fled. The French then commenced a desultory sort of bombardment from their gunboats, and from the two ironclads Alma and Reine Blanche, which were at that time present on the coast; but as the heavy ships could not get nearer than two or three miles from the town, and as there was not sufficient force to land and take possession after a bombardment, they wisely refrained from making a final assault until the arrival of reinforcements.

These arrived about a fortnight afterwards in the shape of the whole French Mediterranean fleet, accompanied by a considerable number of troops, and on the 15th July nine ironclads and a number of smaller vessels opened a vigorous and searching fire on the defences of the town. The result with such an overwhelming force could not for one moment be doubtful, and on the following day the town was captured by assault, the French blue-jackets leading the way. The organised resistance was not serious; but there was that very foolish and fanatical game of potting at the troops and sailors from all sorts of secret hiding-places, the individual when discovered asking for no quarter and selling his life as dearly as possible,—a species of warfare which has no effect on the final result, but which necessitates the prompt shooting of all men found with arms in their hands, besides many other bitter reprisals.

There was a large amount of British property in Sfax, as also some Italian; and amongst the fugitives who took to the boats on the first note of alarm, a great many claimed to be Maltese or other British subjects; so that it is not surprising to find there was a strong feeling amongst the English and Italians at the action taken by the French. The animosity of the Moors and Arabs was also directed solely against the French, and against the Dey and his troops, who were supposed to be merely the tools of France. And in his reports on the state of the country, which he frequently sent to his admiral and to the Admiralty, Tryon always points out that

the feeling amongst the Moors and Arabs is not anti-European, or anti-Christian, but simply anti-French. It was his business, however, to keep on good terms with the French, and also with the Moors and Arabs; but there was the great danger that if he showed too marked a friendship for the latter they would surely expect that England intended to take their part against the French—a delusion which would have plunged the country into still greater difficulties. How well Tryon steered clear of all the rocks and shoals which surrounded him, and kept on good terms with everybody, without sacrificing either the dignity or the interests of his country, may be inferred from the unqualified and very warm approval of his management of affairs by his admiral, the Admiralty, and the Foreign Office, and by the continued confidence which they reposed in him up to the very end of the business. Very complimentary, no doubt; but it kept poor Tryon grilling on the coast of Tunis in an ironclad for the six hottest months of the year. However, when there was work to be done he was happy, and thought little of comfort.

The admirable conduct of the leader of the insurgent townspeople has already been briefly alluded to, and the following extract from Tryon's final report "on the events which attended the siege and fall of Sfax" is pleasant reading, amongst so much that is otherwise, as it shows a generous recognition of the good qualities displayed on both sides. He says:—

"When reading over the *résumé* of evidence taken by the Sfax Commission, there are two names which recur so frequently that they appear to call for notice: they are 'Chacal' and 'Camoum.' The first is the name of a French gun-vessel commanded by Lieutenant Hennique, who was at anchor off Sfax when a panic-stricken population rushed to the beach and sought safety, which they thought was only to be found afloat. He sent his boats in to assist in the embarkation of the refugees: they were fired at and struck; he did not return the fire, well appreciating the condition that if he retaliated, inevitably the safety of Christians and Jews yet on shore would be compromised. He filled his vessel with refugees, and protected the small craft crowded with them that swarmed round his ship for safety and for the assistance that was freely accorded. The evidence shows that very many are deeply indebted to this officer.

"The second name, 'Camoum,' is that of the leader of the townspeople after the panic and flight. It does not appear before the Commission that he in any way brought about what occurred. It rather appears that force of circumstances placed him in the position of the acknowledged leader of his fellow-citizens. In the evidence of 400 witnesses no one has said an ill word against this man. He placed guards, paid at so much a-day, in the streets of the European quarter of the town, and there is good evidence to show that order was preserved and that property was respected. In his position as

chief of a self-constituted Government he ordered in writing a locksmith to open the doors of a few houses to procure certain things that were required, notably guns. A notary was placed at the doors so opened to record what was removed, in order that his action should be free from the suspicion of its being an act of robbery, and to ensure that that which was taken should be used in the way that he and the Government of the town directed. He sent off to the vessel in which were embarked the farmers of tobacco and salt—which are Government monopolies—to get the keys of the stores, so that the sale of these articles, of which the population were in want, might be continued. The keys of the salt were sent, but those of the tobacco were refused. He took possession of some tobacco that had been contraband, and with a notary had account taken of it, and sold it. It can be shown, and the names given, that he appointed Moors to receive and collect dues and taxes: in fact, he took measures to secure government with order, and to check licence."

The above seems to indicate that the pillage of the European quarter of Sfax was not the act of the Moors and Arabs, at any rate during the early part of the trouble.

There appears to have been considerable anxiety —for some days after the first riot at Sfax—that the insurrection would spread to Susa and the other coast towns, and that a general revolt would take place against the Dey's authority; but the prompt

and vigorous action taken by the French showed how hopeless such a course would be, and more peaceful counsels prevailed.

After the capture of Sfax by the French, and the restoration of it to the nominal authority of the Dey, the Jews, Greeks, infidels, and heretics returned, to find their stores broken open and plundered, their strong-boxes ransacked, their *adoul* scattered to the winds, and, in short, general devastation and ruin. They then laid claims for compensation, and the French authorities appointed a Commission of Inquiry, and in order to give it an impartial and international character, an English and Italian delegate were invited to sit upon it. Tryon was the English member, and Conti was the Italian; there was also a Tunisian member. This was the famous Sfax Commission, which sat for many weeks, and heard the evidence of over 400 witnesses.

In Tryon's memoranda we find the following notes relative to the constitution of the Sfax Commission :—

"The directions given to the Commission were: To inquire into the circumstances which attended the capture of Sfax, and to examine any claims which may be brought forward.

"In a letter dated August 18, the terms used were: To assist the French Commissioners in an inquiry which it is intended to hold in the matter of the recent pillage of Sfax.

"In a previous letter of August 13, the terms used were: 'In an inquiry as to pillage in Sfax,'

and it states that the French Minister for Foreign Affairs concurs in the proposal.

"The Admiralty desired me to act in accordance with the wishes of Earl Granville, expressed in Foreign Office letter of the 19th August.

"On the 29th August the first meeting was held at Tunis: a president was elected, and a secretary.

"The duties of the Commission were thus defined:—

"(1st) To estimate the damages of every kind, resulting as much from the bombardment and the capture of the town, as from all the events which preceded or followed this twofold operation.

"(2d) To examine all claims produced by the inhabitants of Sfax and '*de statuer sur elles*,' either by the personal opinion of the members of the Commission, or by any information or evidence it will deem useful or necessary to collect on the spot.

"At the first meeting held at Sfax on the 9th September, by directions from France, the President requested that for the words underlined above the words 'contrôler l'importance' should be substituted, as they had a meaning beyond the power of the Commission."

It thus appears quite clear that the Commission was authorised to inquire into the question of pillage. They sat through many weary sweltering days, and examined an immense number of witnesses, and it appears evident that up to almost the last the French members honestly believed they

would be able to exonerate the French soldiers from the strong suspicion—under which they rested—of pillage.

It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader of the great jealousy which existed between the French and Italians with regard to Tunisian territory, and it is easy to believe that the latest act in the drama —viz., the bombardment and occupation of Sfax by the French—was not calculated to appease that jealousy.

The Italian member of the Commission was a thorn in the side of the French, and on one or two occasions it took all Tryon's tact and good humour to restrain him (as his special friend and colleague) from causing a serious explosion.

The Commission sat for six weeks, and as time went on and various witnesses were examined, it became more and more evident that it would be impossible to exonerate the French soldiers from the charge of pillage; until one fine day, immediately after the examination of an important witness, the president of the Commission suddenly announced that it was dissolved. This was in all respects an unwise step, for the evidence already given could not be wiped out, and would be sent home to the respective Governments. Moreover, unkind critics were sure to imagine and to hint worse than anything that was likely to be given in evidence. Indeed the best friends of France felt that it would have been far better if the general in command of the troops which occupied Sfax had frankly

acknowledged that there had been irregularities, but no more than might have been expected from soldiers so situated, in a town where the streets are narrow and intricate, and where supervision and all the usual means of barracking troops were quite impossible. This would certainly have been better than an unsuccessful attempt to whitewash them completely.

Some of our readers may perhaps remember the allied occupation of Pekin, and the sack of the Summer Palace, and how highly indignant the English soldiers were at the ruthless looting perpetrated by the French. Some of us who knew China wondered what our countrymen could have been about; but still their virtuous indignation was quite admirable, until it turned out that the cause of their anger arose from the unfortunate disposition of the troops, which enabled the French to get first into the Summer Palace, and thus to secure the pick of the loot, leaving to their allies only the heavier and less transportable articles, such as cabinets, bronzes, and china vases.

Little Alice liked the carpenter better than the walrus, because he did not eat so many of the oysters they had both been making friends with; but when she was reminded that *he ate as many as he could get*, she was puzzled.

During the whole of this disturbed time—May till November 1881—which the Monarch spent on the coast of Tunis, Tryon was given considerable freedom to do the best he could for the interests

of Great Britain and British subjects. There was a consul-general at Tunis, Mr Reade, and he and Tryon were in close correspondence with each other, and appear to have been on the most cordial terms, and also to have been substantially in agreement upon almost all points. Tryon was desired to communicate direct with the Admiralty, and if necessary with the Foreign Office, though of course sending copies of his correspondence to his own admiral, Sir Beauchamp Seymour; and in both the public and private correspondence Sir Beauchamp makes frequent allusions to the tact, discretion, and good judgment which Tryon had shown in his management of the various delicate questions which he was called upon to deal with.

Mr Reade appears to have been rather an alarmist, and to have believed somewhat too readily the highly coloured stories (specially those of French aggression) with which the air was filled. He was jealous, and naturally so, of the supremacy of French influence at the rickety court of the Dey; and when M. Roustan, the French Minister, took the bull by the horns and announced that all the foreign affairs of the Dey were to pass through his hands, Mr Reade was very angry, and took a despondent view of Great Britain's position and prestige on the north coast of Africa. It was not, however, the policy of the British Government—of which Lord Granville was Foreign Secretary—to take any active measures to restrain the encroachments of France on the authority of the Dey, and as a

matter of course French ascendancy was permanently established.

Tryon was much disappointed at the sudden dissolution of the Sfax Commission, though he was not altogether unprepared for it, as various loose straws had shown him how the wind was blowing. The labours of the Commission were not entirely thrown away, as the truth was disclosed; and many of the sufferers who had lost property by the pillage were indemnified for their losses. The British and Italian members of the Commission of course sent home independent reports of the proceedings as far as they had gone, and thus a great deal of light was thrown upon the whole business; and, owing largely to Tryon's tact, and judicious management of various troublesome questions, both connected with the Commission and independent of it, international animosities and jealousies were kept within bounds, and the policy of our Government—such as it was—was loyally carried out.

Only once during the six months that the Monarch was stationed on the coast of Tunis did she get a short holiday at Malta, and even then Tryon was not allowed to go in her. It was not possible to give any leave to the crew, and very little to the officers, while the country was in so disturbed a state, as all sorts of difficulties and complications would probably have arisen; so that officers and men were practically confined to their ship: and only those who have experienced it can understand

the extremely irksome conditions of being confined for months on board an ironclad at anchor three miles from the shore, with the thermometer in the shade ranging between 80° and 90° day and night.

Tryon felt—as he always did—for his officers and men. Writing to his wife he says: "I have no interesting news, while I am fully occupied. It is dull work enough for the 600 who are with me; but they are all in wonderful health, and give no trouble whatever."

After the sudden break up of the Sfax Commission there does not appear to have been any sufficient reason for keeping the Monarch on the coast of Tunis—a gunboat would have done just as well as an ironclad, and Tryon felt that he was in rather a false position there, his work being finished; but she was kept there until the end of November, at the request of the Foreign Office, and Tryon had to console himself with the assurance — conveyed to him through his admiral —that he had done so well, and managed all the complicated and delicate questions so satisfactorily, that the Secretary for Foreign Affairs requested he might be kept there!

In a private letter to Tryon on the 14th November, Sir Beauchamp Seymour says: "I send you the official approbation of your conduct, &c., &c. Lord Northbrook" (First Lord of the Admiralty) "hopes that my proposal to him of an occasional visit to Tunis will be accepted, and you will be released. He says: 'I have heard

from Lord Granville, who quite agrees with me as to Tryon's good management, and you can tell him so. . . . Tryon seems to have done very well; I hope he will not suppose that any blame can be attached to him on account of the breaking up of the Commission: I never expected anything to come of it.'"

The official approbation of Tryon's conduct was as follows:—

From the Foreign Office to the Secretary of the Admiralty.

"Sir, — I am directed by Earl Granville to transmit to you herewith, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and for communication to Captain Tryon of H.M.S. Monarch, copy of a note from the French Ambassador at this Court, conveying the grateful acknowledgments of his Government for the courtesy displayed by that officer during the recent operations on the coast of Tunis, and for the services which he rendered to the French who were wounded on the occasion of the capture of Sfax.

"Lord Granville has received with much gratification the testimony thus borne by the French Government to the courtesy and kindness shown by Captain Tryon under exceptionally trying and difficult circumstances.

"(Signed) J. Pauncefoote."

Enclosure to Foreign Office Letter :—

"M. LE COMTE,—M. le Vice-Amiral Commandant-en-Chef l'escadre de la Méditerranée, et le Contre-Amiral Commandant la Division Navale du Levant, ont signalé au Ministre de la Marine l'attitude pleine de courtoisie et de cordialité de M. le Capitaine George Tryon du bâtiment cuirassé Anglais Monarch lors des derniers événements qui se sont produits sur la côte de Tunisie.

"M. le Capitaine Tryon, qui n'a cessé d'entretenir, en toutes circonstances, avec nos officiers, les meilleures relations, s'est montré au moment de la prise de Sfax, particulièrement empressé à venir, par tous les moyens en son pouvoir, en aide à nos blessés, aux quels il a témoigné une sollicitude dont l'Amiral Garnault a été profondément touché.

"Pour satisfaire au désir qui m'est exprimé par M. le Min. de la Marine, je prie V. E. de voulois bien faire parvenir au Capitaine Tryon l'assurance de la sincère gratitude que ses procédés généreux ont inspiré au Gouvt. de la République.—Veuillez, &c.

"J. CHALLEMEL LACOUR.

"S. E. M. LE CTE. GRANVILLE."

And from the Admiralty to Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour:—

"SIR,—As the time is now arriving when H.M.S. Monarch will be relieved from service on the coast

of Tunis, I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to signify their direction to you to convey to Captain Tryon of H.M.S. Monarch their Lordships' approbation of the sound judgment and discretion he has shown in the performance of the duties intrusted to him as senior officer on the coast of Tunis, and as a member of the International Commission of Sfax, appointed to consider the claims of foreigners whose property was injured during the bombardment and occupation of that town by the French troops.

"(Signed) ROBT. HALL."

And, further, from Lord Granville :—

"As it is unlikely that the Commission will again be called together, Captain Tryon's labours may be considered to be at an end, and Lord Granville desires to take this opportunity of expressing to their Lordships his high appreciation of the admirable manner in which that officer performed the onerous duties which devolved upon him whilst acting as British Commissioner. His Lordship will also be glad that Captain Tryon should be thanked for the assistance rendered by him to this department since his return to England, with reference to the claims upon which he reported; and he trusts that his valuable services at Sfax will be recognised by their Lordships in such a manner as they may consider most appropriate."

This last letter of thanks was written in April 1882, after Tryon's return to England.

At last, in the latter end of November 1881, the Monarch received orders to go to Malta and pay off, which she did in January 1882; and Tryon with his paid-off crew went home to England in the Tamar: but whilst waiting at Malta for the arrival of the Tamar, an extraordinary and audacious robbery took place, by which Tryon was a severe loser.

It seems that the paid-off crew and officers of the Monarch were hulked — as it is technically called — on board the Hibernia, waiting for the Tamar, the Hibernia being an old wooden three-decker, which does the double duty of flagship to the Admiral Superintendent of the dockyard, and of receiving-ship for the crews of ships in dock, or those waiting passage. A locked leather portmanteau of Tryon's, containing most of his valuables, was placed in the captain's cabin, and there was a sentry at the door; but some clever Maltese thieves effected an entrance through a porthole, or by some other means, cut open the portmanteau, and stole everything of value, including money, curiosities, and various small articles, which were priceless to the owner, amongst the latter being a gold snuff-box (the gift of the Prince of Wales), a souvenir of the Raleigh's Indian cruise. A clue was obtained of the thieves, but the property was never recovered. It was a most annoying and irritating loss; but Tryon was of too buoyant and cheerful a nature to allow such an occurrence to depress him for long, and he and his crew went home in the Tamar, a merry party.

The commission of the Monarch, though it was not enlivened by any very interesting or exciting events, was certainly what sailors call a happy commission; and Tryon, as usual, gained for himself not only the confidence and approbation of his superiors, but also the respect and affectionate regard of the officers and men who formed his ship's company.

The Rev. S. S. Browne, who was the chaplain of the Monarch during the period that Tryon commanded her, retains the happiest recollections of the commission. He says: "A pronounced characteristic of Captain Tryon's generous nature was his dislike to partake alone of any sport or pleasure. During the happy three years that I was with him in the Monarch it was due to this amiable disposition that the officers and men of the ship owed many a delightful excursion of pleasure and instruction; for Captain Tryon 'showed the flag' in many out-of-the-way but most interesting places along the southern coast of Asia Minor. . . . The captain himself was always full of information with regard to the historical interest, as well as the sporting attractions, of these wild and unfrequented places; and he took great pleasure in talking over these matters with the officers. But it was not only of the officers' pleasure and interest that the captain thought. He loved his ship's company, and whenever opportunity offered, the interests of the men were not forgotten: the large boats were hoisted out, and whenever possible, after the drills were

over, a merry party of 150 or more blue-jackets and marines enjoyed a picnic on shore. . . . It was very pleasant to see the captain's anxious care for the men's happiness and enjoyment, and its success. The men knew it, and thoroughly appreciated it. . . . Our ship's company were noted in the fleet, not only for workaday smartness and energy, but also for a joyous temperament, for they knew that after a hard day's work would come generous recognition of the same. They felt that they were justly and kindly treated, and that no good man would go unrecognised and unrewarded. Captain Tryon delighted in his men's welfare and happiness, as well as in their smartness and good conduct."

This is the testimony of the chaplain of the Monarch. The chaplain of a man-of-war occupies an altogether unique position: if he is a conscientious and energetic man — such as Parson Browne evidently was—he not only performs his bare duty, according to the instructions laid down, by "prayers and preachings," and by visiting periodically the sick bay, but he goes about amongst the men, talks to them in their messes, and, if he exercises tact and discretion, he has opportunities of ascertaining their thoughts, opinions, and feelings, from which all other officers are completely debarred by the inexorable canons of discipline.

CHAPTER X.

SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY.

AFTER his return to England from his three years' commission in the Monarch, Tryon was allowed four months' rest, and was then appointed to the important post of Secretary to the Admiralty.

The appointment is usually held by a civilian, though there have been one or two exceptions, when naval men have been appointed.

There is considerable difference of opinion amongst those most competent to judge, whether it is better for the service that the Secretary to the Admiralty (the "Permanent" Secretary as he is called, to distinguish him from the political or Parliamentary Secretary) should be a civilian or a naval officer. A great deal, of course, depends upon the man, and there is much to be said on both sides of the question. It is argued on one side that the Secretary, being practically the head of a staff of civilians, ought—on principle—to be a civilian himself; and on the other side it is pointed out that so much of a technical nautical nature has to pass through his

hands, the actual wording of despatches, sailing orders, &c., that he ought to be a man with a nautical training. It is enough to say that there have been good Secretaries and indifferent Secretaries, both naval and civilian; and it is not proposed to argue the point here, or to express any opinion upon it.

There does not seem to be a dissentient voice, however, as to the fact that Tryon was one of the best Secretaries that ever held the post.

It appears that on accepting the appointment he stipulated that he should not be kept in the office for more than two years; but he attained his flag-rank a month or two before the two years had expired, and took that opportunity of resigning the post. He had, however, done good work there, and left his mark behind him. He went there at a time when the department was in want of a strong hand to effect some reorganisations which the march of events had rendered desirable; and he showed, as usual, not only the strong hand and the sagacious mind, but also his habitual tact and courtesy, which enabled him to effect reforms and carry his views into execution with the smallest possible amount of friction.

Most people felt that it was no use arguing with George Tryon, and that it was better to acquiesce quietly—more particularly as he always made it so easy to acquiesce and fall in with his views. The art of persuasion without seeming to persuade was one of his strong points, and often enabled him to

carry out his views without hurting the feelings of those who differed from him; and this was undoubtedly one of the secrets of his popularity—for he was popular, in the best sense of the word, and it is probable that few men have come to the top of their profession, and surpassed their contemporaries, with less friction, and the excitement of less jealousy, than Tryon seems to have caused.

Jealousy there must be, as long as human nature remains what it is, though the wise and the amiable suppress it, and do not allow it to be seen or to interfere with national interests: but in reading the naval and military records of our country, from the earliest times up to the latest, it is unfortunately but too obvious that personal jealousies have on many occasions frustrated the most promising schemes of strategy, thus courting defeat and disaster; and even when these latter have been avoided, sacrificing in other ways the highest interests of the nation.

These personal jealousies were far more frequent in the navy before the days of St Vincent and Nelson than they have been since. These two great men set a brilliant example of absolute devotion to their country's interests, to the exclusion of all meaner or more selfish sentiments, which happily has not been without effect. They established and endowed with their example a code of duty which it has been the aim and ambition of their successors to maintain, to emulate, and to instil into the minds of

all ranks in the navy; and it is to be hoped not altogether without success.

It is perhaps no great compliment to say that Tryon never showed jealousy of any of his brother officers, for it may pertinently be replied that he never had occasion for it; but it is a high compliment to say that he surpassed many of his contemporaries without exciting much jealousy, for this was the result of tact, and a frank, genial, winning manner. Gifts, perhaps, but gifts which required cultivation: talents which were not wrapped up in a napkin and hidden away.

A distinguished officer, who, though he cannot actually be called a contemporary of Tryon, for he was some years his senior, and occupied an important post at the time the latter was Secretary to the Admiralty, says of him: "He was a great personality, only wanting the occasion to make himself renowned. He was a head and shoulders, in mind as well as in body, above any naval man that I have known during the last fifty years, with perhaps the exception of William Peel."

Another distinguished officer, who was an actual contemporary of Tryon, and has filled with great success some of the most important posts at the Admiralty and afloat, after giving a brief description of the way in which the post of Permanent Secretary to the Admiralty has been filled from the earliest times, generally by a civilian, less frequently by a naval officer, and with ever-varying success,

according to the ability of the individual, brings an interesting and amusing sketch down to the time when Mr (afterwards Sir Robert) Hamilton was transferred to Ireland: "And then came George Tryon. He went there to prove (in spite of some former failures) how well a naval officer could fill the billet, and he proved it to the hilt; for never before or since, I venture to say, was the part so well played. In one branch of his own particular work —viz., the signing of Admiralty letters—you may imagine how wholesome an influence was ever present to pick up a lost stitch, or blow out some grain of friction-dust, and drop in the oil instead. And when it is remembered that no Lord ever sees the letter written from his minute, it may be imagined how much there is to pick up and correct, in sailing orders, technical letters to captains of ships, commanders-in-chief, &c. And then you can imagine how a gifted naval officer, with the courage of his opinions, and no fear of his fellow-men, could counsel and advise whenever his opinion was sought, or whenever he thought for the good of the service he ought to speak. And so it came about that George Tryon as Permanent Secretary was a power, and a power for much good. . . . But, notwithstanding his brilliant success, he was the last of his cloth in that particular chair. It is difficult to show up his brilliancy and sagacity in detail, as it always must be in office work."

The above is the opinion of a man who, had he

been himself of a less generous nature, might well have felt some jealousy of Tryon's success, and rapid preferment from one important post to another.

The immediate cause of Tryon's appointment to the post of Permanent Secretary was somewhat remarkable. Admiral Robert Hall had filled the post for some time, and retired in May 1882, being succeeded by Mr (afterwards Sir Robert) Hamilton. The day after this change took place Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr Burke were murdered in the Phœnix Park, when Mr Hamilton was appointed to fill Mr Burke's place, and Sir George Trevelyan that of Lord Frederick. Admiral Robert Hall was recalled to his post at the Admiralty, but died quite suddenly a few weeks afterwards. Lord Northbrook, who was at that time the First Lord of the Admiralty, says: "I asked Tryon to take the Secretaryship temporarily, for he was well acquainted with the work, owing to his having been Private Secretary. I need hardly say that his knowledge of the service, his reputation among his brother officers, and his genial disposition and cheery manners, made his tenure of office both useful to the public service and most acceptable to all who were in business relations with him."

Amongst the other useful work which Tryon did while occupying the post of "Temporary Permanent" Secretary, it is probable that the most useful, most important, and most enduring of his works was the assistance he gave in instituting a Naval

Intelligence Committee, which finally resolved itself into the present Naval Intelligence Department—a department which has since become one of the most important at the Admiralty.

The official record of Tryon's connection with the Intelligence Department runs as follows :—

"In August 1882 Captain Tryon made certain suggestions to the First Lord for the compilation of naval information already in the Admiralty, supplemented by that in the Intelligence Department of the army, and by that which can be obtained by the navy. His proposal was to utilise and increase the information already in office; to give naval officers more information than they possessed; to obtain such information as to the elevation, as well as the plans, of all harbours and military works.

"The subject had also been previously under discussion by the First Lord and the First Naval Lord, and a committee, consisting of Captain Tryon as president, with the Hydrographer and the head of the military branch as members, was appointed; and they formulated the scheme under which the Intelligence Committee was appointed directly afterwards. The First Lord thanked Captain Tryon for his suggestions.

"Captain Tryon was mainly instrumental in carrying out the plans.

"In later years the Committee became merged into the existing Naval Intelligence Department."

If Tryon had never done anything else in his life to earn the gratitude of the whole naval service, this quick recognition of such a glaring deficiency in our naval administration as the want of an Intelligence Department, and the prompt and effective steps which he took to supply it, would have sufficiently merited that gratitude.

The Naval Intelligence Department is like a good many other modern institutions—steamships, railways, telegraphs, and bicycles; we wonder how on earth we ever got on without them. We may, at any rate, congratulate ourselves that Great Britain did not find herself involved in a naval war, in these days of steam and electricity, before she had taken the precaution to provide herself with a Naval Intelligence Department.

The small committee of two—viz., Commander Hall, R.N., and Mr Hoste of the civilian department of the Admiralty—which started the business in 1882, has since developed into one of the best organised, and certainly one of the most useful, departments in the service of the State.

One of the penalties attached to the post of Permanent Secretary to the Admiralty is the penalty of dining out. It came particularly heavy on Tryon, as he was well known socially for his genial disposition, his humour, and his great conversational powers, so that he was a desirable acquisition to any dinner-party.

City banquets, private and public dinner-parties,

and receptions of all sorts, he was invited to—more than he could possibly go to. He used to pick and choose amongst them, and for a long time his wife could not understand what principle he went on, and why he refused some and accepted others, until it turned out that he selected those places where he thought he would be likely to meet some one who could give information of value to him in his profession, or in his post as Secretary to the Admiralty. He cared little or nothing for the ordinary gossip of society, which occupies so large a share of the conversation at most fashionable entertainments—though he dearly loved and enjoyed a good story. But he was continually looking out for useful information, and was ready to extract it from any and every source. It was a common saying of his that he learnt something from everybody.

Tryon was all his life very fond of sport, and was a good shot. He got a short autumn holiday in 1883, and went to Scotland to shoot. On September 15th he killed three stags at his brother-in-law's deer-forest at Glenartney, and had other shooting which he thoroughly enjoyed, and returned refreshed to his work.

It seems rather a cruel fate that a strong, active, athletic man, whose tastes were certainly in the direction of field-sports and outdoor exercise, should have been destined to spend so much of his time at desk and office work. Yet so it was in his case, and so no doubt it often is in the case of many

others; and we find the lines of our destiny cast in directions quite contrary to that which we would have selected for ourselves.

But if Tryon's life as Secretary to the Admiralty was not physically an active one, it certainly was so mentally, and there were many ways in which he was able to work off his superabundant energy. Idleness was the one thing he could not endure, and during his forty-five years' service he was not often asked to do so.

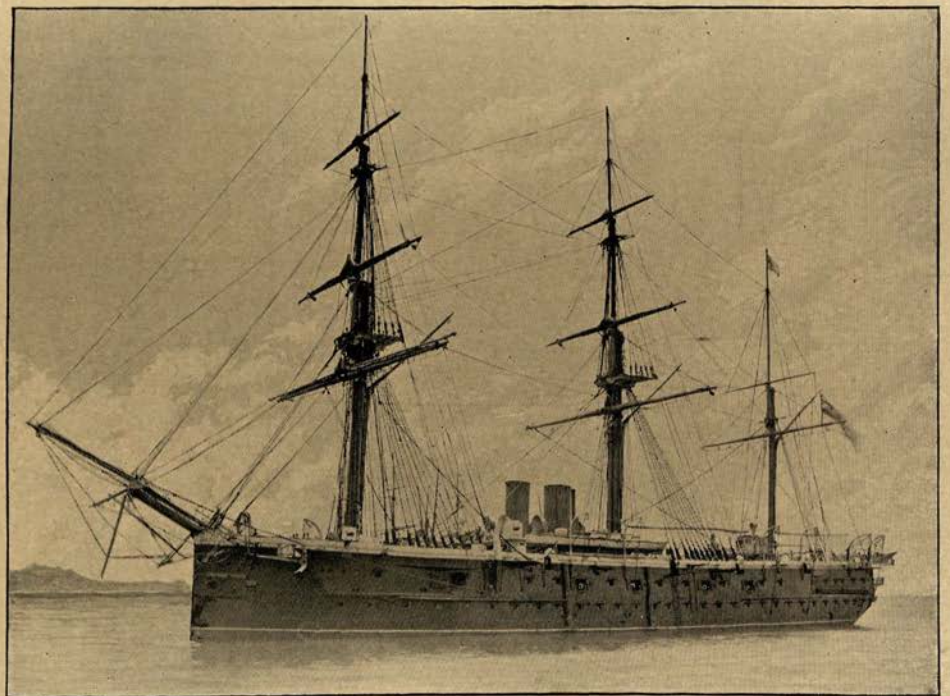
CHAPTER XI.

AUSTRALIA.

On the 4th of December 1884 Rear-Admiral Tryon left England by P. & O. steamer Indus to take command of the Australian station; and he hoisted his flag on board the Nelson at Sydney on the 22d January 1885, relieving Commodore Erskine.

The growing importance of the Australian colonies, and the value of the strategic position which they occupy in the Western Pacific, decided the Home Government to place an admiral in command of the station instead of a commodore, and Tryon was the first admiral appointed to the post.

It was in every way an admirable selection; for Tryon's well-known social qualities, his frank, cheery, genial manners, and his love of hospitality, were qualifications only second—if second—to his high professional ability and knowledge, and were thoroughly appreciated by our Australian brethren in all the colonies, where his name is still remembered with kindly regard and veneration, and deep regret for his untimely and tragic death.



H.M.S. NELSON.

The sympathetic and genuine interest which he took in all their public affairs—whilst judiciously steering clear of party politics—and the advice and assistance which he gave them in organising a suitable system of defence, both ashore and afloat, are gratefully remembered and acknowledged by those "potent, grave, and reverend seigniors" whose interest and activity extended beyond the field of social hospitalities and entertainments.

With reference to the formation of the squadron of fast cruisers which is now maintained at the joint expense of the Australian colonies, and forms such an important feature in their scheme of defence, one of these leaders (Sir Samuel Griffith, Premier of Queensland) says: "I entertained a great admiration for Sir George Tryon, which was not in any way diminished by the circumstances of his death. . . . The correspondence shows the spirit in which he approached any question with which he had to deal, and in which the colonial Governments were interested. I always felt that I was dealing with a friend, to whom it gave much more pleasure to grant than to refuse a request; but who would not do either without letting you know the reason, if the matter was of sufficient importance. It was only by dealing—in the initial stages of the negotiations for the additional squadron—with the matter in this spirit, of desiring to meet the Governments half-way, if possible, that he was able to bring the negotiations to a practical conclusion. In the hands of a man of a different

temper nothing would have come of them. In my opinion he deserves far greater credit than any one else for bringing about the successful result."

The formation of the special Australian squadron was not, however, the first important question which Admiral Tryon had to deal with after his arrival on the station. The question of New Guinea, and the scandals of the labour traffic between Queensland and the islands, were the two burning questions which came first under his notice.

The cruel and unscrupulous kidnapping, and the shameful atrocities which had been committed by Englishmen, in the prosecution of the so-called free labour traffic, were fresh in men's minds, and a special squadron of small sailing schooners, commissioned as regular men-of-war, and commanded by lieutenants, was kept constantly cruising amongst the islands to maintain order, and to prevent a recurrence of the abominations which had recently disgraced the English name.

The following memorandum on "the labour question, Queensland, Pacific Islands, New Guinea," gives Tryon's views on this subject, and it also shows the mutual respect with which he and Sir Samuel Griffith regarded each other, each recognising in the other a shrewd practical mind:—

"The history of Queensland, if ever written in full, will contain some pages — on which will be narrated the dealings of white men with natives — which will not be pleasant reading. It will

record massacres, horrors, cruelty, and revenge, not entirely on one side, it is true; but it rarely will record efforts to win or to compromise. Certain it is that a 'nigger' is by many scarcely regarded as a human being. The stories told, and the acts that have passed without reproof, tend to bring up a generation hardened against natives. There has been far too much shooting down in cold blood deliberately done.

"There are unquestionably many men perfectly honourable and just in all questions in which the European race alone is concerned, who look upon the disappearance of the aborigines as inevitable, who think that the sooner this is done the better, and who care not to hear or to know dead men's tales. There are many who have been concerned in the labour traffic who dare not tell what they have seen or done. Far too large a part of the population laugh at the idea of justice for the nigger.

"On the labour part of the question—viz., the importation of natives from the islands, and their hire by proprietors to work on their property—something has of recent years been done to protect them against acts of cruelty, and to secure their return to their native islands. In a few instances the law has been put in force, and in others the inquiries held have exposed with good effect to public gaze some very bad cases.

"The able letter written by Sir Samuel Griffith, 1st April 1885 (vol. i., Federal Council of Australia),

on the subject of the proposed separation of Northern from Southern Queensland, will be read with interest. He shows that the population of Queensland may be divided—so far as their special interests are concerned—into four sections, the town, the mining, the pastoral, and the agricultural; and that it is the owners of agricultural lands on the coast—the growers of sugar-cane—who almost alone desire the import of Island or of Asiatic labour.

"The mass of the labouring population, as in other colonies, advocate short hours and long wages: they discourage immigration, and are dead against the advent of Chinese or any foreign labour, as tending to fill the labour market, to decrease wages, as well as to lessen the employ of the more costly European labourer. They say, If you cannot grow sugar without coloured labour, then you shall not grow sugar.

"It is said that the system of large estates, owned by absentee proprietors, represented by resident managers, is objectionable. This condition now exists to a considerable extent, for much land has been opened out in Queensland by enterprising capitalists in New South Wales and Victoria; and instead of perpetuating this condition, it is desired, if possible, that the land should be more subdivided, and that there should be a larger number of owners resident on the land. Sir Samuel Griffith states as his opinion that the land can be cultivated by Europeans 'under different conditions,' and that it will be

so cultivated unless that result is prevented by the influx of Asiatic labourers in large numbers. He fears great difficulties would arise from the influx of large numbers of men of races who have for generations been accustomed to a servile or inferior position, into a colony where the institutions are founded on a popular basis of representation. This would, he thinks, involve grave political and social problems. The question is, Are we to contemplate Queensland in the future as a purely white-man's land, or is it to carry a mixed population, or are we to contemplate the possibility—without trying to prevent it—of the land being overrun by an Asiatic population, to the practical exclusion of the European labourer? It is shown that it is difficult to quote a country in which the European and Asiatic labourers work side by side. The latter, it is said, would live, thrive, and save on a pittance upon which the European could not subsist, and, entering into every branch of industry, he would save money, and would soon drive the labouring white man out. This is said to be the key to the grave objection made to the introduction of the Chinese in America and Australia.

"With reference to the fitness of trusting those who would employ Asiatic labour to govern their country, Sir Samuel Griffith shows that while the present regulations which apply to the employment of Kanakas do not go beyond what is required by the plainest dictates of humanity, yet

they are resented by the planters. It seems to be suggested that if the regulations were framed by them they would be hard indeed. He expresses the opinion that if any part of Australia is thrown open to Asiatic immigration, only those parts should be selected which are unfit for European settlements, and they should constitute a separate territory, and be governed as a Crown colony, so as to secure impartial justice between the superior and inferior race.

"If this is correct with regard to the lands referred to,—and it is the deliberate opinion of one of the most eminent men in Australia,—surely it applies with still greater force to the case of New Guinea and the islands."

The memorandum then goes on to argue that it cannot be supposed the rich lands of Queensland will be allowed to lie idle for years simply because the miners or any other section of labourers object to imported labour, or the introduction of capital to develop the country; and proceeds to show that the rapid development of Queensland is due to the introduction of capital from New South Wales and Victoria; and further argues that it does not so much matter whether the capitalists who invest their money in clearing the land and developing the natural resources of the country live in it or live out of it. Tryon admits, of course, that it would be better for the country if they lived in it, and spent their gains there: but it is principally the money that

is wanted; and it is better to have the capital, even without the capitalist, than to go without. Besides which, it is argued that, if the speculator is successful, he is almost certain to launch into new projects for the further development of the country; and that, if he is unsuccessful, his money is sunk in the country and cannot be removed, and has probably done some good: therefore it is the business of Queensland statesmen to endeavour to attract capital to their country, even if it is "accompanied" by that peculiarly Hibernian product, the "absentee landlord," with which the isle of St Patrick is said to be swarming.

It is scarcely necessary to say that this memorandum on Queensland and the labour question was not written by Tryon immediately after his arrival on the station; nor until he had had ample opportunities of forming an impartial judgment upon it, by studying the station records, and hearing the views not only of colonial statesmen, but of those interested on both sides. It has been introduced here, as the labour question, with all the many complications which it involved, was one of the first that demanded the attention of Admiral Tryon after he took up the command of the Australian station. With the labour question, and the numerous outrages which a system of cruel and barbarous kidnapping gave rise to, was intimately connected that of New Guinea. The south-east corner of this great island had lately

been annexed (more technically "protected") by Great Britain. It was in 1884 that Commodore Erskine, in the name of her Majesty Queen Victoria, formally hoisted the union-jack at Port Moresby, and declared her sovereignty over some thousands of square miles of tropical mountain, forest, and plain, sparsely inhabited by as bloodthirsty and treacherous a set of savages as the Western Pacific can produce.[1]

[1] In the official 'Report on Native Affairs, British New Guinea, there appears an "approximate return of outrages and massacres by natives within the protectorate of British New Guinea." It extends from May 1845 to September 1886, and contains eighty-one items. These vary in gravity from "threatened attack" to wholesale massacre and cannibalism; and to most of these is appended the word "unprovoked." At the end of the copy of this printed report found amongst Sir George Tryon's papers the following note appears in his own handwriting: "The word 'unprovoked' must in nearly every case be received with the greatest caution. It is not accurate."

The inhabitants of the south-east peninsula and adjacent islands of New Guinea are thus described by Lieutenant Dawson of H.M.S. Basilisk, who was employed surveying in those waters: "The natives met with were all savages of the pure Papuan type, black, with woolly hair. They were perfectly nude, their bodies being smeared with dirt and clay. They appeared filthy in their habits, and were sullen and treacherous, and very unfriendly to visitors."

Another description of them by Captain Heath, who was also employed surveying in H.M.S. Rattlesnake, says: "As to the character of the natives, I am not so convinced of their universal amiability as M. Latillière seems to be, for they wantonly and treacherously attacked our boats at daylight in the morning without the slightest provocation, when anchored under one of the islands of the Louisiades. On shore on another island a party of officers who landed had some difficulty in getting back to the boat, in consequence of the threatening conduct of the natives. While on the islands off the mainland, their conduct, though sometimes friendly, seldom induced any confidence in their amicable intentions being long continued. Then, if I remember rightly, a vessel with Chinese emigrants was wrecked somewhere in the Louisiades some years ago, and it was reported that the natives penned the Chinese up like sheep, and daily came to select the one in

Our readers may remember that some international as well as intercolonial friction was developed in connection with the annexation of British New Guinea, as Germany also was helping herself to a good slice out of the north-east corner of the island. There was also friction with France, as our colonial brethren in New South Wales and Queensland strongly objected to the advent of French convicts, who were in the habit of making their escape from the island of New Caledonia (the French penal settlement) and coming across in boats to the neighbouring coast of Australia, where they perpetrated on fresh ground some of the crimes which had caused French judges to send them to the other end of the world. This question was a very sore one for some years; and then France proposed a compromise, and promised that if Great Britain would make no objection to the annexation of the New Hebrides ("which form geographically a part of the New Caledonia group"), she would undertake to send no more convicts to any of the islands of the Western Pacific; but to this arrangement the Australian colonies objected strongly.

All these questions were occupying the attention of the Colonial Office, the Government of the several Australian colonies, and the admiral in com-

best condition for the table, the last survivor being rescued by some passing vessel; while Captain Yule himself, having landed to take observations near Cape Possession, lost his instruments, and would probably also have lost his life had he not succeeded in amusing the natives by dancing, dressed in nothing but a short flannel, while making good his retreat to the boat."

mand of the station, when suddenly a still more serious one burst upon them. This was the Russian war-scare of 1885.

In the early spring of that year the tension between Great Britain and Russia became so acute, in consequence of the Afghan frontier skirmish known as the Penjdeh affair, that a war between Great Britain and Russia seemed to be unavoidable. Australia was thoroughly alarmed. The long line of undefended coast, the rich floating trade, intercolonial and foreign-going, protected only by a small squadron of slow and antiquated wooden small-craft, in addition to the Nelson, a heavily armed though slow and partially protected iron cruiser, offered a tempting field of operations for enterprising Russian cruisers; and several of these were known to be ready to commence their depredations directly war was declared. This scare, though not the primary cause of, at any rate greatly hastened, the formation of the present Australian auxiliary squadron, paid for by the colonies; but in the meantime it upset many other arrangements, amongst them the organisation of a form of government for the administration of our newly acquired property in New Guinea. General Sir Peter Scratchley had just been appointed High Commissioner for that district and the adjacent islands; but he was obliged to give up the ship (the Wolverine ex-man-of-war) which had been allotted to him and his staff, and he had to hire a small merchant steamer.

And then Sir Peter's untimely death, some few months afterwards, caused fresh difficulties to those interested in the settlement of New Guinea. He was succeeded by Mr John Douglas, C.M.G., who then took the work in hand.

The birth of an Australian navy marks an epoch in the history of that great and rapidly growing country which will be looked back upon with much interest by patriotic Australians. Whatever the future may have in store for them,—federation, monarchy, republic, or some new and as yet unheard-of form of government,—it is certain that their extensive maritime interests will eventually require a powerful navy for their protection; and it will be on record in the archives of the various Australasian Governments that Admiral Tryon had more to do with the initiation of that navy than any other man.

It has been thought by some that the idea of forming a separate Australasian squadron originated with Admiral Tryon: this, however, does not seem to be the case; nor does it appear that he ever claimed to have been the father of the happy thought. The first that we hear about it officially is in the form of a memorandum from the First Sea Lord of the Admiralty (Sir Cooper Key), 28th October 1884. There may, of course, have been conversations and discussions on the subject between Sir Cooper Key and Tryon before the latter left England to take command of the Australian station; or there may have been

confidential notes and correspondence, which are not open to the writer of these memoirs, and might not be proper for publication even if they were open; but it is certain that the idea was started before the advent of the Russian war-scare, though doubtless the extreme probability of war in the spring of 1885, and the obviously defenceless state of the country and its floating trade, quickened the various Australian Governments to a sense of their responsibilities, and enabled them to press upon their Parliaments the necessity for voting the money required. In short, there can be no doubt that this scare greatly assisted Tryon in his arduous and delicate task of bringing about united action amongst the different colonies, instead of the alternative plan of each colony providing one or two ships for its own peculiar use and particular local defence. A bundle of loose sticks this would have been, instead of a well-bound fagot.

Sir Cooper Key's memorandum, alluded to above, points out that "many of the colonial Governments, notably those of the Australasian colonies, are now thoroughly aware of the necessity of providing for the protection of their ports against attack, in the event of Great Britain being involved in war. They naturally consider that the most effective way of supplementing the support which will be afforded by the ships of the Royal Navy, cruising and stationed in colonial waters, will be by the organisation of small squadrons at each

port for local harbour defence." And he then proceeds to show the many grave objections to such a plan. Without entering into the question of the strategic weakness of small isolated squadrons acting independently, Sir Cooper Key indicates some of the insuperable difficulties in keeping such squadrons efficient and ready for war. First, as to the officers and the general discipline of the crews: they would not be under our Naval Discipline Act, but must be guided by rules of their own. The relative rank of officers would be a source of endless trouble; some of them would probably be retired officers of the Royal Navy, and some would come from the merchant service: they would have no opportunity of keeping up their knowledge — or rather of acquiring the necessary fresh knowledge — of gunnery and torpedo work, the rapid development and changes in which are so marked a feature in modern navies. Then, with regard to the important question of signalling, which requires so much and such constant practice to keep men efficient, there would be confusion in time of war, when they would inevitably be called upon to act in conjunction with the Imperial squadron on the station: and many other minor difficulties of detail, which it is unnecessary to enter into, but all pointing to the inherent weakness and inefficiency of separate squadrons for the different colonies, instead of one united Australasian squadron, manned and officered by the Royal Navy, and always, both in peace and

war, under the orders of the Admiral of the station.

Sir Cooper Key then proceeds to point out the lines on which a special Australasian squadron ought to be formed, and finally suggests that directions should be given to "Rear-Admiral George Tryon, who will shortly leave England to take command of the naval forces in Australia, to communicate with the various colonial Governments, and endeavour to obtain their concurrence in the adoption of the system."

Tryon did so; but it was a difficult task, calling for all his tact and judgment, and all his energy and perseverance.

He found great difficulty in combating the idea of the sufficiency of purely local naval defence,—the idea that the ship or ships which each colony was to be called upon to pay for should be stationed on the coasts of that colony, for the special protection of that colony, and that there should be a guarantee that the ship or ships should not be withdrawn from the coasts of that colony either in peace or war. A comfortable idea, perhaps, for those who have never studied naval history, and who are not acquainted with the fundamental laws of naval strategy, but nevertheless thoroughly vicious and unsound.

Probably one of the reasons why Admiral Tryon and Sir Samuel Griffith worked in such complete harmony all through the negotiations for the establishment of the auxiliary squadron was the

fact that the latter seems to have grasped from the first the unsoundness of the purely local defence idea, and showed true statesmanlike qualities in his efforts to bring about united action amongst all the Australasian colonies,—this, of course, being also Tryon's object from the first. But such was the irony of events, that the Queensland Parliament (of which Mr Griffith was then Premier) was the last of all the Australian Parliaments to pass the Naval Defence Bill—in fact rejected it, and did not finally pass it till about two years afterwards, greatly to Mr Griffith's chagrin and disappointment.

We cannot find fault with the Australians for holding unsound views on the subject of naval defence, when we remember that until quite lately the same views as to the defence of the United Kingdom were very generally held in this country. In fact, it may almost be said that the awakening of the national mind to a just appreciation of the only sort of naval strategy which can save Great Britain from ruin in case of a maritime war dates from the publication of the works of that gifted American, Captain Mahan. Before the publication of these most valuable works there was a widespread—if not general—idea in England that the local defence of the naval and mercantile ports of the British Isles was the main factor of Imperial defence. Captain Mahan's works exploded this theory, and exposed the folly of it.

As a preliminary to the intercolonial discussion

concerning the establishment of a special squadron of ships for the defence of Australia and its extensive floating trade, Admiral Tryon was asked to express his views as to the nature of the defence most suitable to the several colonies. The invitation to do so came from Sir Henry Loch, who was then Governor of Victoria; and it was replied to by Tryon in the form of a memorandum, a copy of which was sent round to all the colonies, and from which the following may be quoted:—

"Considerations of defence naturally involve an estimate of what they are to be prepared against.

"History is apt to repeat itself; squadrons and fleets have escaped the most vigilant admirals, and the most skilful strategists failed in days of old so to order our fleets as to prevent this. Since those days the composition of the navies of the world has greatly altered, and at this time it is far easier for an admiral to avoid notice and conceal destination.

"It is possible that an attack may be delivered by a small squadron of ironclads of a type that does not entitle them to a place in the first rank; they would be very formidable if employed to attack our colonies. And still more possibly a hostile squadron might contain vessels of the fast partially armoured class that are now much in fashion, and the construction of them is on the increase. It is well to consider what such a squadron could do, supposing it had arrived off our coast, having avoided detection, the admiral in command, deceived by false

reports, gone to New Zealand, with the telegraphs cut.

"If there is a determination to resist, such a squadron, even should it force a channel or the line of defence, unless it is accompanied by a considerable land force, cannot do much against a large population if there is a resolute determination to resist at all costs.

"It could effect a certain amount of harm by bombardment; but to such towns as Melbourne and Sydney the injury would not be very great even if the fleet expended all its ammunition. The more lasting effect would be the destruction of trade, and with it the recuperative power of the country for years. If, in lieu of resistance, there was hesitation, followed by a decision to yield,—a condition I can hardly contemplate,—trade and commerce will be equally destroyed; and if there is one thing more certain than another, it is that demands, if yielded to, would have a more disastrous effect on the welfare of the country than ever could be produced by the heaviest bombardment.

"History is replete with instances of the successful resistance that can be improvised by large towns against even a very considerable force.

"The destruction of trade and commerce, and with it the infliction of long and lasting injury, could be also effected by an enemy who sent fast cruisers off our ports to capture our vessels.

"To render an attack from the first-named futile, and, if possible, to render the task so improbable of

success that no one would contemplate the undertaking, a local defence is called into existence; but while it is not very costly to protect our homes with the aid of local forces, they do not, and they could not, help to drive off cruisers such as could prey upon us. We must, therefore, provide the means whereby they may be captured, if possible; if not, at all events driven off our coasts.

"It seems to me that, if our local defences are in a satisfactory condition, a heavy squadron would have no mission in these waters. The cost would be great, the maintenance difficult, and in time it would be overtaken.

"From the above it appears that two forces are required, each with its special mission, but each aiding the other. The duty of the first is to defy attack and to welcome the coming friend, and to afford him a safe harbour; the latter, to chase and capture the enemy on the wide sea, or, if driven home by superior force, to join in the defence."

The memorandum then goes on to indicate the number and class of the vessels which Tryon thinks necessary for the protection of the trade of the Australasian colonies in addition to the Imperial squadron already maintained in those waters. He shows great discrimination in treating the case of the naval defence of Australia entirely on its own merits, and not confusing it with that of a country dependent on the freedom of the sea for its existence. For Australia being a self-supporting country, and able to exist and feed itself even if

the command of the adjacent seas were to fall temporarily into the hands of an enemy, it behoves the several colonies to prepare such local fixed defences, in the shape of batteries and submarine mines, as to deny the harbours to an enemy, and to forbid requisitions for coal and other stores; though Tryon does not fail to point out the extreme importance to Australia of being able to defend its floating trade also, and hence the necessity for a squadron of fast cruisers.

The local defences, therefore, should be quite distinct from the mobile defence, the latter being entirely under the orders of the admiral on the station, manned by Imperial officers and men, though paid for by joint subscriptions of the colonies on the basis of population; but to be used, if necessary as one squadron, to meet the enemy on the high seas to the best strategic and tactical advantage, instead of being frittered away and divided for the local defence of each of the colonies, with the probability of being attacked and beaten in detail.

Tryon's encouragement to the Australians to organise local corps to man the fixed defences, and to resist raids or violation of territory, was also very clear and distinct, though he takes care not to mix it up or confuse it with the equally important sea-going defence.

Of the former he says: "Local corps can be formed on a system which withdraws those who join them but little from those occupations which

increase the wealth of a country. Local corps are subject to the keenest local criticism—to a criticism that is perfectly well understood by them, but which would probably ruin a more regular force. The system of local corps tends to identify the population with the defence. It is less likely to languish. It gives experience to many in the supply and in the use of warlike stores. It does not continuously separate the men from their wives and families. It habituates the people to feel that possibly some day they may be required to make personal sacrifices. It gives a sense of security. It tends to allay panic. It accustoms the Government of the country to study the questions involved, and the responsibility which belongs to it on this subject is kept perpetually before it. The essential to do justice to local corps is a nucleus of trained men and experts."

And of the mobile defence he says: "But if we are to have efficient vessels to capture cruisers, they must have thoroughly efficient crews, trained and inured to the sea, and well practised in their vessels. This is a totally different thing to the other.

"To keep the crews of such ships efficient, they must be changed from time to time. There are no means of drafting them from ship to ship out here at this time, or of sending them to undergo a course of training in the new methods or new implements of war, or of keeping them acquainted with what they may have to meet.

"I see no way, in 1885, of securing efficiency save by making such vessels *bonâ-fide* men-of-war, on the same footing in every respect as all her Majesty's ships in commission."

This last sentence is the key to the whole question; and this was the task that Tryon was instructed to carry out—viz., to get the Governments of the several colonies to take this view of the question, and to agree to pay for the ships and their maintenance.

It was no easy matter. The views of the different Governments were very diverse. New Zealand, for instance, was emphatic in pointing out that the distance of those islands from the Australian coast rendered it necessary that a portion of the squadron, at any rate, should make Auckland its headquarters. The New Zealand Ministers expressed the opinion that, although war appeared imminent, no special steps had been taken for the protection of their coasts, and that their defencelessness, which was well known to foreign countries, invited attack.

They complain bitterly of the neglect with which they have been treated, and point out that from its geographical situation Auckland ought to have a portion of the Australian squadron stationed there, and that this portion should be a branch of the main Australian command, and be administered by a senior naval officer, with Auckland as his headquarters.

It will give a good idea of the nature of the difficulties with which Admiral Tryon had to deal

in bringing the different Australasian colonies to take united action in the matter of naval defence, if a short quotation is given from a memorandum issued by the New Zealand Ministers on the subject, after the original proposition for the maintenance of a special Australasian squadron had been submitted to them. They say :—

"Ministers venture to express the opinion that the Admiral has not thought out the question sufficiently, and is entirely mistaken as to the view which he appears, from paragraph 12 of his letter, to hold as to the inability or unwillingness of New Zealand to supply whatever may be needed for the purpose of the headquarters of a section of the fleet. Ministers think that if the Admiral will honour this colony with a visit he will entertain a higher opinion of its resources, and be more alive to its real necessities in the matter of naval defence.

"During the last five years and a half (from the 1st January 1880 to the present time) only fourteen visits have been made to New Zealand by her Majesty's ships, whilst those of foreign war-vessels have been more numerous. The Admiral, whilst admitting this, states that the cruises which had to be undertaken in the Pacific islands have so fully occupied the squadron, that they have been unable to visit New Zealand more frequently.

"Ministers are distinctly of opinion that New Zealand requires the permanent location of a portion of the squadron, and that, in the interests of

economy, this is desirable. They of course do not mean that the vessels so located are not to be available for island service, or under the uncontrolled disposition of the Admiral in time of war. But they would point out that the reason given by the Admiral for her Majesty's ships not having visited New Zealand ports more frequently is an additional argument in favour of Auckland being looked upon as the headquarters of the Pacific station. On a late occasion a vessel was required on a very important service at Samoa. It took her about as many weeks to reach that island from Sydney as it would have taken days had she started from Auckland."

One cannot help admiring the very natural and proper desire of the responsible Ministers of each colony to make provision to the utmost of their ability for the special interests, and for the defence and security, of their own land. It was not that any of the colonies were lacking in zeal and patriotism, but rather an excess of these qualities, which made each of them wish to take a leading part in the business. But this spirit of emulation made Tryon's efforts to bring them into line none the less difficult.

New Zealand Ministers, in particular, looked well ahead, and in the next paragraph of the memorandum above quoted the following passage occurs: "In connection with this part of the subject" (a threatened attack from the north) "Ministers must point out that, in the arrangements contemplated

by the Admiral, he entirely overlooks the consideration that in about five years from the present time" (this was written in 1885) "the whole aspect of affairs will be altered by the completion of the Panama Canal. The westward approach to Australia will be of less moment, whilst Auckland will be of immeasurably more strategic importance to all Australasia."

But Tryon did not get angry when people differed with him: he only smiled and pegged away in perfect good-humour, and made due allowances for the desire of each colony to further its own special interests, for he remembered that in the main they were all animated by the most loyal and patriotic sentiments. Indeed this had been specially shown in the case of New Zealand by the offer to the Imperial Government of a thousand trained men to take part in military operations in any part of the world; and although the offer was not accepted, it was known to be none the less thoroughly sincere, and showed the spirit of the colony to be equal to that of its elder sister, New South Wales, which actually did send a contingent to Egypt—and splendid men they were, by all accounts.

There can be no doubt that during the acute stage of the Russian war-scare, in the spring of 1885, Tryon was greatly concerned as to the defenceless state of many of the towns and harbours, and particularly of those containing coal-stores, which came within the limits of his command, and which he would be expected to defend in case war

actually broke out. Some of them seemed to offer a most tempting prize for a small raiding squadron, or even for a single enterprising cruiser, bent on doing as much mischief as possible, and making requisitions on defenceless towns, with the alternative of bombardment in case the requisitions were not complied with.

With the view of frustrating this method of warfare, and of giving mutual support and confidence to the different colonies, Tryon proposed that all the Australian Governments should agree to make good any losses which might occur to individual colonies, towns, or owners—particularly of coal-stores—in consequence of refusal to comply with requisitions, and the resolution to suffer bombardment instead.

Tryon's proposition for mutual support and inter-colonial indemnity was addressed to the New South Wales Government, and forwarded by it to the other colonies. His memorandum shows a very clear appreciation of the nature of the attacks which would probably have been made on Australia if war had actually broken out between Great Britain and Russia. He says:—

"The great centres of wealth, of trade and commerce—Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide—are 1400 miles apart. They all are more or less protected by defensive forces and works. Nor must we forget Hobart and Tasmania, with its attachments to us. It can be shown—

"1. That while possibly one of these centres

might be attacked, all cannot be attacked at the same time.

"2. That the maintenance of a foreign fleet far from its own shores and depots is a most costly and difficult task.

"3. That it is the habit of some foreign nations to make war support war, by relying largely on requisitions made on the inhabitants of the country with which they are at war.

"4. That a squadron of a few cruisers might expect to sustain themselves by their captures, and requisitions made on places not provided with regular defensive works, unless measures are taken beforehand to defeat them in their object.

"5. That there are many such places on our long seaboard of 7500 miles.

"6. That the defence of such places is in the hands of local corps and riflemen.

"7. That such corps can offer a certain and effectual defence, and possibly will capture the boats sent from an ordinary naval force or squadron.

"8. That history is replete with instances when a few resolute men have resisted successfully very considerable bodies of men landed from ships, particularly when rifle-pits and trenches have been made, and the position studied beforehand.

"9. That an enemy has before now attempted to

obtain supplies and a compliance with his demand by a threatened attack.

"10. That resistance may cause a destruction of property, and a stern refusal to yield may cause an enemy to endeavour to frighten the inhabitants into yielding, and into supplying his needs.

"11. That even if he does fire his guns, only temporary inconvenience to the inhabitants should befall them.

"12. That the slightest concession to demands will be surely followed by increased demands, and a lot far worse than paragraph 11.

"13. Remembering that if all supplies are refused, either by force or by the destruction of coal and other stores necessary for the maintenance of ships, his power to molest other places and other colonies is limited.

"14. That if he expends his ammunition on one place, he has all the less for the next place.

"15. That if the system of absolutely securing the denial of all coal and supplies to an enemy is attained, he cannot fail to be greatly hindered.

"16. That demands are likely to be made on places that have no defensive works.

"17. That it is most advisable to bring this home to all.

"Therefore, with the view to give force to that great existing national unity which goes so far to

command success, I venture to suggest to you whether it would not only be proper, but wise and reasonable, for every colony to agree that in every case, whether a house, a village, or a town suffers from an enemy because his demands are bravely refused, that the loss incurred will be made good out of the general revenue of these colonies.

"With the view only to propose a system, the sum required might be contributed by each colony according to its population.

"The squadron under my command, I trust, may be able to do much, but the sea is wide, the coming nights long and dark, and the ships cannot be everywhere; but the proposal, if assented to, would very greatly assist the navy in the performance of the task allotted to it: and I shall be proud for one to be permitted to share in the cost of the proposal, whether the contribution is based on income, or as otherwise decided."

To which Mr Dalley, the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales (afterwards The Right Hon. William Dalley, P.C., a great friend and admirer of Tryon, since dead), replied in the following terms:—

"I thank you on behalf of the Government and people of this colony for this latest proof of your sympathy with our efforts to organise an effective defence of this country, and for the valuable advice which on this as on all matters in connection therewith you have so generously furnished to the Government. I shall take the earliest opportunity of in-

viting the attention of all the Governments of all the Australian colonies to this important subject, with the view of securing that unanimity of their action which you have so ably counselled. This I shall endeavour to accomplish by a circular communication to the heads of the Governments of all the colonies, to which I propose to attach the letter which you have done me the honour to address to me. By a careful perusal of your letter, I feel that the course of action proposed will commend itself to the patriotism and sagacity of all the Australian Governments, and that the objects which you desire to attain will be effectually accomplished."

Tryon's proposal was excellent, and there can scarcely be a doubt that had war ensued it would have been formally agreed to by all the colonies. It was peculiarly applicable to the Australian colonies at that time, with their extensive coast-line, their scattered wealth, and practically undefended stores of coal. Its loyal adoption would have strengthened immensely the hands of the Admiral responsible for their protection.

The prospects of war were so imminent in the spring of 1885 that, amongst other precautions, the Admiralty ordered the equipment of several of the large mail-steamers which had been placed on the list of auxiliary cruisers, ready to be armed with a few light guns, and commissioned as regular men-of-war, with the view of frustrating the action of similar vessels, which it was well known had been prepared, and were ready to be let loose upon our ocean

commerce the moment war was actually declared. Two of these large steamers, the Massilia and Lusitania, were in Australia at the time, and they were armed and fitted out under Tryon's directions in the shortest time of all the auxiliary merchant cruisers.

The Australians were fortunate in having a man of Tryon's energy and ability with them at the time of such a crisis: he thoroughly identified himself with all their interests, making those interests his own, and always speaking of "our" coasts, "our" harbours, "our" towns, and was untiring in his efforts to make the best possible preparations for the defence of all the colonies, not merely spasmodically and during the crisis of the war-scare, but after that scare had passed over. He went steadily to work, in conjunction with the Inspector-General of Fortifications, to select the best sites for forts and batteries and mine-fields, so as to ensure the permanent safety of the large towns against sudden attack, and thus avert a recurrence of the somewhat undignified scare which the probability of war with Russia had created. The scare was undoubtedly of permanent use to the Australasian colonies, as it opened their eyes to the comparatively defenceless state of their coasts and commerce.

Tryon's views on armaments may be gathered from the following remarks, which occur in a letter to the Premier of Queensland, written in July 1885, subsequent to the acute stage of the war-scare: "It seems to me that the object of the maintenance of armaments is to increase the prospects of the main-

tenance of an honourable peace; to divert the desire to attack by not inviting it through weakness; and to enable us to act wisely and rightly in our own interests, and at the same time frankly and fairly by others, without unduly considering whether it will offend this or that Power. If we are strong, we shall find that such expressions as 'We must make allowances for the sensibilities of other nations' will cease to be used,—my belief being that these sensibilities are strong when a nation has to deal with another that it is felt will yield to such arguments, either from weakness or other causes. In the interests of the maintenance of peace, so far as it depends on preparedness and strength, it is not only wise to be strong, but to appear to be so in the eyes of others."

And then, with the view of getting all the colonies to act together as a united force, instead of each acting separately in its own immediate and particular interests, he continues: "A force that others consider is not a united force, bound together by every tie, will not be held to be so strong as if the contrary were the case; nor would it be so. There would not be that harmonious action that gives the confidence which goes so far to seal success. Thus, though in point of fact there may be some difference between the methods by which the force is produced, even semblance of unity should be maintained. Other nations know nothing of our position, nor of these great colonies. Even the Republics of the world are more imperial than

we are, especially as regards the flag, the symbol of unity and of the nation."

After a certain amount of correspondence had taken place between the Admiral and the representatives of the several colonies, and also a considerable amount of intercolonial correspondence, on the subject of a system of mutual defence in the shape of a squadron of fast cruisers for the special protection of Australian coasts and commerce, a definite proposal was made by Admiral Tryon as to the number, nature, and cost of the ships which he considered most suitable for the purpose.

The original proposal was for six Archers, and eight sea-going torpedo-boats of about 150 tons,—the Archer being a vessel of 1770 tons, carrying six 6-inch breechloading guns, and having a speed of about 16 knots: the cost of each Archer (complete) being about £105,000, and of each torpedo-boat about £53,000. The torpedo-boats to have a speed of about 19 knots.

But whilst the negotiations were in progress, a considerable and somewhat sudden advance took place in Europe with regard to the general ideas as to the speed of "fast cruisers." "Speed" is of course always a comparative term, and the "fast" vessel of to-day is a "slow" vessel ten years hence. In 1885 16 knots was considered a fast cruiser, though not the fastest, as our own Iris and Mercury were afloat prior to this date, with a speed of 18 knots; but yet there was an idea that speed might be too dearly bought, and that it might be

better—in the case of a man-of war—to sacrifice a knot or two of speed for the sake of a much more powerful armament, some protection for engines and boilers, and a larger supply of coal.[1] But the action of our French neighbours in laying down cruisers of a speed of 19 knots forced us to adopt a similar policy; and thus it very soon came to be accepted that nothing under 19 knots could be regarded as a satisfactory speed for a cruiser. It was fortunate that this somewhat sudden jump took place before the Australian cruisers were ordered, as it enabled a greatly superior class of vessel to be supplied, instead of those originally contemplated—though of course at an increased cost, for speed is expensive.

The cruisers actually built for, and appropriated to, the Australian service, instead of being Archers of 1770 tons and 16 knots speed, were vessels of 2575 tons and 19 knots speed. Five of these, designed by Sir William White, were built and equipped in England, manned by Imperial officers and men, and sent to Australia, to be under the command of the Admiral on that station, for the special protection of Australian trade, and to be paid for by the Colonial Governments. It is not necessary to enter into the details of the agreement, which was finally arrived at after much discussion between the different Governments and the Admi-

[1] It is assumed that our readers are aware that all men-of-war represent a compromise, on a given tonnage, between the attributes of speed, armament, protection, and coal-supply—the last representing what is called "radius of action."

ralty, the latter being represented in Australia by Tryon, whose untiring energy, and admirable tact and courtesy towards all concerned, are generally admitted to have been the principal factors of a successful issue. It is sufficient to say that the squadron now exists. Four of the ships are kept permanently in commission, and one in reserve; and it can scarcely be doubted that this small beginning represents the embyro of that which is destined to expand in years to come into a great and powerful navy, whether Australia eventually becomes an independent Power or remains a part of the British empire; for her ocean trade is already considerable, and is sure to increase with wealth and population.

Tryon never saw the squadron that he had done so much to procure for Australia. This of course was only natural, as ships are not built and equipped in a day; and they did not arrive on the station until long after he had left it.

Before the intercolonial negotiations concerning the new squadron were completed, while they were still in progress, and Tryon was devoting all his energy towards bringing them to a successful conclusion, an event occurred which seems to have caused him much annoyance and disappointment. This was the assembly of the Colonial Conference in London to consider the very question which he had been authorised to settle. It was composed of the Agent-General, with the addition of one delegate from each of the colonies concerned. Tryon felt

this deeply, as it was practically cutting the ground from under his feet, and to a large extent ignoring the hard work which he had already done. He was far too loyal and patriotic to make any public complaint on the subject; and until the day of his death it was not known to any save his closest and most intimate friends that it was largely in consequence of this that he asked to be relieved from his command at the expiration of two years, instead of holding it for three years, which is the normal term of such a command.

Admiral Tryon was not accompanied to Australia by his wife. During the early part of his command threatening war-clouds were in the air; and besides this, there was no house ready for him to occupy. The New South Wales Government, which had previously paid the rent of a house for the commodore in the town of Sydney, had recently given a house in a beautiful site on the north shore of the harbour, opposite to the town, and overlooking the man-of-war anchorage, which is almost at the foot of the garden, but the house required alterations, and it was some months before it was ready for occupation. But as soon as Tryon did get into it, he entertained Sydney society with a hospitality which was remembered for many years after. He is spoken of as a most attentive and genial host; particularly kind and thoughtful in planning parties and entertainments for the amusement of the younger members of society, though not neglectful of the orthodox and stately dinner-party for the

elders. Some of his entertainments were on a grand scale, and were thoroughly appreciated by a community which is famous throughout the empire for its own lavish hospitality, and particularly for the warm and hearty welcome always given to English sailors.

Amongst other local matters, Tryon took a great interest in the Naval Home at Sydney. This institution had been founded as a memorial to the late Commodore Goodenough, a distinguished and accomplished officer, who had lost his life while in command of the Australian station, through the effects of a poisoned arrow fired at him by the natives of Santa Cruz island, to whom he had gone on a mission of peace and conciliation. But the demand for accommodation in the Goodenough Home had entirely outgrown the building, and a larger one was required. The New South Wales Government, with their usual generosity, gave a site; and Tryon, with his characteristic energy, set to work to raise subscriptions, and to arrange about the plans and details of the present "Royal Naval House" at Sydney, which was formally opened some years afterwards by Lord Carrington, the Governor of New South Wales, at the request of Admiral Lord Charles Scott, who was then in command of the Australian station.

Tryon was greatly assisted in raising the necessary funds by a fortuitous circumstance—a sort of windfall. It appears that when New South Wales set the patriotic example of sending a strong con-

tingent of volunteer troops to Egypt, to fight beside the Queen's soldiers in that belated and unsuccessful Soudan expedition for the relief of the heroic Gordon at Khartoum, large sums of money were raised by private subscription throughout the colony for the purpose of providing for the prospective widows and orphans, or others dependent on the gallant volunteers; but as the latter happened not to see any hard fighting, nor to suffer any serious losses from climate or otherwise, the sums subscribed were greatly in excess of the requirements for which the money was raised, and with the consent of the donors much of this was transferred to the building fund of the "Royal Naval House" at Sydney—an institution which is described by an admiral lately in command of the Australian station as a fine stone building capable of accommodating nearly 300 men, and the best naval home in the empire.

Another matter which Tryon pushed forward with great energy was the completion of the naval depot in Sydney harbour. His predecessor—Commodore Erskine—thought it of more consequence to have a depot and repairing-shops, where the ships already on the station could be repaired, than to increase the squadron without having a proper repairing-yard; and he obtained from the New South Wales Government a suitable site for the purpose on Garden Island, and started the work, which Tryon continued but did not complete. It has been said that when the works are completed the resources of

the yard will be second only to Malta of the British dockyards abroad—though this was said before the new plans for strengthening Gibraltar, in this respect, were taken in hand. Hong-Kong also will be a formidable rival.

In the selection of sites for new batteries, and submarine mine-fields for the defence of the various Australian and New Zealand harbours, Tryon was largely consulted in conjunction with the military authorities. Such questions are quite as much naval as military. Indeed a trained seaman, a commander of ships and squadrons, who has kept himself thoroughly abreast of all modern improvements, is the only person capable of indicating the nature and strength of any probable naval attack on a fortified or partially fortified port, and of thus pointing out to land artillerists and engineers the position and extent of the necessary defences to make the port reasonably secure.

It has been before remarked that Tryon was entirely in favour of all such local defences being altogether in the hands of local corps, so as to get the inhabitants of each district to identify themselves with their own defence—that is to say, the defence of their own homes. He was most emphatic upon this point; and although he recognises that it will be necessary to have a few highly trained experts from the mother country as instructors for the local corps, he repudiates the idea of anything in the nature of a subsidised force for manning the forts and batteries, or working the submarine mine defences.

This may at first sight appear to be inconsistent on his part, as the auxiliary squadron which he was working so hard to establish was neither more nor less than a subsidised force, and was on that account strongly objected to by some high authorities, as it instituted taxation without representation, the colonies being asked to pay for the ships and their maintenance, and yet to have no voice in their management.

But Tryon was above all things practical, and he knew perfectly well that in the present state of development of the Australian colonies—and probably for some years to come—it would not be possible to have a thoroughly efficient sea-going squadron of modern ships manned otherwise than with Imperial officers and men who had undergone years of systematic scientific training, and who, moreover, could be periodically changed, so as to keep them abreast of all the *coming* improvements.

He, however, had no doubt as to the desirability of allowing the Australians to furnish the *personnel* for their own defence wherever it was practicable—that is to say, for all their shore and purely harbour defences.

Writing on the subject to the Premier of Queensland in October 1886, he says: "It is not a mere subsidised force that will do what is wanted. It is not only money that is required to produce effective forces, but it is the personal service of our countrymen all over the world. It is blood rather than gold that is the basis of every true force; and to

awaken the true spirit, the Government of each colony, the people of each colony, should manage, as far as possible, their local forces during time of peace. Unless they do so the burden of cost will be irksome, and the interest of the people in their maintenance—which is a first factor for success—will not be evoked."

Here we see the practical mind which scorns to be pedantically consistent simply for the sake of appearances, but would rather apply boldly the proper means to attain the end desired—the defence of the empire.

During the earlier period of his command in Australian waters Tryon was very much tied to Sydney in consequence of the probability of war. Sydney was the most central position he could take up to await events; and he was also forced to keep his squadron concentrated and within easy reach of his call, instead of dispersing them to look after British interests in the various districts of his widely extended command. But he was able to pay visits to Victoria and to Queensland; and in the summer (our winter) of 1885-86, and again in that of 1886-87, he was able to visit New Zealand and Tasmania. He gave valuable advice to the Government of New Zealand with regard to the nature and extent of the local defences necessary for the protection of that colony; and on the occasion of his first visit a meeting was held at Government House, Wellington, in January 1886, to discuss the question of the naval defences of the colony. There were present

the Governor, Sir Wm. Drummond Jervois, the Admiral, and the responsible Ministers of the New Zealand Parliament, of whom Sir Robert Stout was Premier.

One of Admiral Tryon's most difficult tasks was to get the New Zealand Ministers to agree to take common action with the other Australasian colonies. They insisted on regarding their case as peculiar, and as requiring special treatment: and no doubt to a certain extent they were right, as their distance from Australia gave them a feeling of isolation; and they probably entertained the idea that if war with any maritime Power were to break out, the Admiral in command of the station would be apt to concentrate his attention, and the limited force at his command, upon the defence of the richer and more populous colonies on the Australian coast, and that their inadequately defended country would in consequence specially invite attack. They seem to have failed to grasp the strategic truism, that a concentration of the British naval forces in Australasian waters would afford to them a better protection than a dispersion of the same force for the special protection of each colony. Before consenting to pay their share towards the maintenance of an additional squadron for the protection of the Australasian colonies, they desired to obtain some promise that a section of that squadron should be permanently stationed in New Zealand. They say: "Ministers at once admit that, from an Im-

perial point of view, the defences of New Zealand and Australia may be considered as bound up together. They are of opinion, however, that New Zealand is so exceptionally situated, being so distant from Australia, that no system of naval defence would be complete which did not make New Zealand the headquarters of a section of the Australasian fleet. This was pointed out in the previous memorandum of Ministers, and they do not require to urge it further."

Not only New Zealand, but all the colonies, had special views (as indeed was only natural in self-governing colonies) as to the constitution, strength, and financial arrangements for the auxiliary squadron; though as a rule they were content to leave the details, as to the size and speed of the ships, to the judgment of the Admiral and the Admiralty. There was, however, one exception to this, in the case of New Zealand, where the Premier in his memorandum points out, with much sagacity and foresight, that the proposed speed of the ships is insufficient. He modestly remarks: "Ministers venture to point out that it has been authoritatively stated that cruisers being able to steam at full speed only up to 16½ knots would be of little service in attacking some of the vessels that are now constructed and afloat. This, however, is a matter on which the Admiralty are better able to express an opinion than Ministers."

Ministers, however, were right in this case, and 19-knot vessels were eventually supplied.

During his visit to New Zealand Tryon managed to find time to visit that marvellous volcanic district of the hot lakes and the pink-and-white terraces,—those wonders of the world, the surpassing charm and beauty of which have been enthusiastically described by many of those who have had the good fortune to visit them: a good fortune denied to all future generations, as, not long after Tryon's visit to them, they were totally destroyed by an earthquake and volcanic eruption on a gigantic scale, which obliterated every trace of the natural beauty of this district, leaving behind nothing more attractive than heaps of blackened cinders and a strong smell of sulphur.

After his second visit to New Zealand in February and March 1887, Tryon returned to Sydney, and in April he hauled down his flag, and handed over the command of the station to Rear-Admiral Henry Fairfax. He then went overland to Melbourne, and embarked on board the P. & O. steamer Ballarat for England.

Tryon left his mark on Australia: he not only left behind him the pleasantest recollections of his genial cheery manners, his courteous social hospitality, and his great tact and judgment in dealing with delicate Imperio-Colonial questions, which in less skilful hands might easily have given rise to soreness and jealousy; but he also left solid work behind him, in the shape of vastly improved and better organised means of defence, both by land and sea. He also en-

couraged—while carefully avoiding any semblance of dictating—a spirit of unity amongst the various colonies, pointing out the many common interests, especially the interests of mutual defence, which he as an impartial looker-on was better able to discern than the popularly elected Ministers, who held office by virtue of their opinions or administrative abilities concerning narrower and more essentially local matters.

The seed which Tryon worked so hard to sow may perhaps some day bear fruit in Australian, if not in Australasian, federation; but he would be a bold man who ventured to prophesy on such a thorny subject. It must be left entirely to the Australians themselves, without interference from the mother country. They are of age, let them speak for themselves. War would doubtless bring about federation immediately; but war is a rough remedy, and might bring other things besides.

The amount of correspondence, official and semi-official, which passed between Admiral Tryon and the Governors and Prime Ministers of the various colonies during the two years that the former was in naval command of the station was something appalling.

It has never been asserted that Tryon was perfect. Indeed it would be mere mockery to say that any man was without his faults; and one of Tryon's certainly was that he wrote too much. One of his best and dearest friends says of him, "He wrote too much, and too often, and his

writing was very difficult to make out." This is quite true, and his biographer knows it to his cost. In reading his despatches, and the large correspondence above alluded to, it is impossible to avoid regretting that he did not put his views into fewer words. There are sound common-sense, and very often lofty sentiments, in almost everything he wrote; but it is unfortunately much too diffuse, and if it had been put into half the space it would have been far more effective. This defect was very remarkable in an eminently practical man, and a man of prompt and vigorous action, which he certainly was; but when he got a pen in his hand he could not help spinning a long yarn. He thought fast, and he wrote fast, and latterly very illegibly, so that even his confidential secretaries and clerks often made mistakes in copying his writing. But in spite of being somewhat "long-winded" he did good solid work in Australia, and had the satisfaction of knowing that it was appreciated by his immediate superiors at the Admiralty, as the following letter will testify:—

"ADMIRALTY, 10*th January* 1887.

"SIR,—My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have had under their consideration your despatches, reporting the result of the meeting of the Premiers of the several colonies on board H.M.S. Nelson on the 26th and 27th of April 1886 to consider the question of the local defence

and protection of floating trade in the waters of the Australasian colonies.

"(2) You were charged with the duty of taking the initiative in bringing before the Premiers and Governors of the several colonies this important question, at the request of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and their Lordships regret that as the period of your command will so soon draw to a close, it will be impossible for you to bring to a satisfactory conclusion a question in the consideration of which you have taken such a deep interest.

"(3) The Secretary of State for the Colonies has expressed his approval of the course pursued by you throughout these negotiations, and I have their Lordships' commands to signify to you their fullest approbation of your energetic and judicious conduct, and their approbation of the marked ability you have displayed in the consideration of this important scheme.

"(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR"
(*Secretary to the Admiralty*).

And again, on giving up the command of the station :—

"ADMIRALTY, 8*th June* 1887.

"SIR,—In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 17th of April last, reporting that you had on that day transferred the command of the Australian station to Rear-Admiral Fairfax, I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to convey to you their approval of the

efficient manner in which the important duties devolving upon you as Commander-in-Chief on the Australian station have been carried out.

"(2) My Lords have already expressed the appreciation they entertain of the energetic and judicious measures adopted by you in furtherance of the scheme for the defence and protection of our floating trade in the waters of the Australasian colonies; and their Lordships believe that if that scheme becomes operative it will be largely due to the skill and success with which you dealt with the local objections of the different colonies to a federated defence of common interests.

"(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR"
(*Secretary to the Admiralty*).

CHAPTER XII.

HOME AGAIN.

SHORTLY after his return to England Admiral Tryon was made a K.C.B., in recognition of his services in Australia. He had already received the C.B. for his Abyssinian services. The K.C.M.G. was really the order which he would have liked best, as it is essentially a colonial order, and he liked to be identified with the Colonies, and was proud of his work in Australia. But the K.C.B. was also a high honour and a recognition of his services, which, it is needless to say, he accepted with pride and gratification.

In July 1887 Admiral Sir George Tryon contested unsuccessfully the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire. Writing to his old friend, Sir Samuel Griffith, in Australia, he thus describes his defeat :—

"Immediately on my arrival in England I received an invitation to stand for a division of Lincolnshire with which I was connected. I rushed hastily into the fray, fought hard, and was badly beaten. The

labourers, for the first time, voted *en bloc* for my opponent; nearly all farmers and others for me. This was largely due to what is called agricultural depression. The district is, agriculturally, perhaps the richest part of all England, and more beautiful and plenteous crops you never saw than there are this year; but prices are so much lower than they were, while there is no corresponding reduction in the cost of production, that times are very bad to what they used to be a few years back. Thus the farmers employ fewer labourers, and the wages have decreased by a good two shillings a-week—a good seventh. Many have left their villages, seeking employ elsewhere, and many have emigrated, and these of the very best. Their relatives who remain do not study causes, but lament the loss—as they call it—of their relatives, whom they consider to be driven away because the farmers won't provide them employ; and, believing in promises made without a prospect of any being fulfilled, voted for a man who had been talking among them for two years, backed by an Irish brigade, who, with the pathos of Irving in a tragedy, told them Irish stories.

"From the North of Ireland I on my side had a small brigade, but they came late in the field. They came voluntarily, and told their stories and their views with fully equal ability and pathos; but they were outnumbered.

"Out of one train at Spalding five Irish Parnellites stepped, to meet three Unionist Irish representatives.

"Personally I regretted defeat because of party reasons. I came home full of what I thought were world-wide notions and principles, and I thought I should be proud to take a part in the House, especially in colonial matters, and to do my best to solidify the present great interest that is taken by the people in matters that affect them. I was glad to find that the conference at the Colonial Office had at all events brought about a consensus of opinion on naval matters, on which we were so much in agreement."

Tryon's defeat was no doubt a great disappointment to him. He was greatly handicapped by having such a short time to prepare for the fight. "Rushed hastily into the fray" is a very fair description of the matter. He only arrived in England from Australia on the 5th of June, went down to Spalding on the 14th, and the polling took place on the 1st of July. He was further handicapped by being lame. He hurt one of his legs on board the steamer coming home, and it was still very painful, so that he had to hobble about using a stick, a state of affairs which considerably curtailed his wonted activity.

The following was his address to the electors :—

"GENTLEMEN,—By the death of the late Earl of Winchilsea you are deprived of the services of your zealous and able member; and I have the honour to address you as a candidate for the vacant seat.

I do so in reply to the flattering invitation which I have just received.

"Twelve months since your votes were asked on the question whether Great Britain and Ireland were to remain one United Kingdom, or whether Ireland was to be made half independent, with the inevitable consequence of early and complete separation. Your choice was not doubtful; in common with the great majority of your countrymen, you resolved that the Union should be maintained at all risks.

"But this plain expression of the national will at the general election was met by the disruptionists with open defiance. The authority of the law was to be set at nought in Ireland by the 'Plan of Campaign' and other similar combinations, while all legislation (including many measures primarily affecting the interests of the agricultural and working classes) was to be prevented by obstruction in Parliament, until Englishmen in sheer disgust should give up the struggle.

"Gentlemen, what course was a British Government to adopt? Were they to submit tamely to these tactics, and betray the first principles of the Constitution, by the confession that the lawfully expressed will of the majority might be overborne by any minority turbulent and unscrupulous enough to make the attempt? Or were they to face their opponents boldly, trusting that the nation would give them all requisite support in carrying out its own distinct mandate?

"The Government have chosen the latter course. Finding Loyalists in Ireland boycotted, outraged, and exposed to absolute ruin, and the ordinary law foiled by seditious combinations, they have introduced a bill, of which it has been truly said that its very shadow has already produced a beneficial effect,—a bill not creating fresh crimes, not instituting an oppressive system of coercion, but striking at the root of the evil, by giving the requisite powers for suppressing illegal societies. And obstruction in Parliament has been checked by a reform of procedure, modelled in a great measure on proposals formerly made by Mr Gladstone, and calculated to restore to the House of Commons its rightful control over its own business, whilst leaving the fullest scope for legitimate debate.

"Gentlemen, the struggle is nearly over, and success is all but assured; will you now falter in your policy, or change your mandate?

"Having returned but a week ago from the Australian station, where (in addition to the usual duties of Commander-in-Chief) it has been my task to promote to the utmost of my power the practical union of the empire for national purposes, I beg of you to complete the work which you have begun, and to maintain the existing union of Great Britain and Ireland as the keystone of a united empire.

"With local and social questions my acquaintance is as yet scanty. And I shall hope to find occasion to speak to you on these matters in a very short time. But I am not blind to the great benefits

derived from good cottage or allotment gardens, and I would cordially support any measure which would place these advantages within the reach of labourers generally. The measure proposed by the Government for the relief of agricultural tenants from the burden of tithes appears eminently fair to all classes, and I would do my utmost to enable it to become law.

"Gentlemen, I present myself as a Conservative, as a supporter of the present Government, and as a staunch Unionist.—I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant, GEORGE TRYON, *Rear-Admiral.*"

Such were Tryon's politics. And this address he followed up by another of the same tenor, though entering more into particulars, on the 28th of June, two days before the poll. He also attended many meetings, made many speeches, and worked with his characteristic energy; but it was all of no use: his opponent had too much start of him; he had been nursing the constituency for two years, and understood all about local matters, and these, no doubt, appeared to be of far more consequence to the electors of the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire than the unity of the empire.

Thus was Tryon defeated in the only attempt he ever made to enter Parliament. But it may fairly be doubted whether his talents and great administrative abilities were not employed with greater advantage to his country in the position which he

shortly afterwards occupied—as Admiral Superintendent of Reserves—than they would have been as a private member of the House of Commons.

His bad luck and disappointment, however, did not prevent him from sympathising with his friends in their difficulties and disappointments; and we find him writing again to his old friend Sir Samuel Griffith, the Prime Minister of Queensland, on the 30th January 1888, in the following terms: "I can sympathise with you with all my heart.[1] You had no other course open to you than that you followed, and I am much obliged to you for letting me know the state of the case. It must be recognised (as I openly and proudly do) by all who are acquainted with the history of the naval bill that you, first of all men, did most to bring all the colonies to pull together in this important question of defence. If it had not been for you there would have been no meeting in Sydney, and without that meeting, and the discussion, and the attention that was drawn to the subject among all classes, it is safe to say the subject would not have been ripe when the conference in London took place. No one has rendered such service to Australasia as you have, in all matters that are of importance to all. You have

[1] Note by Sir S. Griffith.—"In consequence of delay on the part of New South Wales and Victoria in agreeing to a basis of contribution towards the cost of the auxiliary squadron until late in 1887, the Government of Queensland was prevented from asking parliamentary sanction until the last week of the session, when a new electoral law having been passed, and a dissolution being imminent, they were compelled to prorogue without passing the bill.

"It was passed in 1890."

prepared the way for a still further expansion of united action for all national purposes."

This was a generous and grateful acknowledgment of Sir Samuel Griffith's co-operation in the matter of the Australian auxiliary squadron, and it shows how the two men worked loyally together to attain the desired object.

Tryon was unemployed from June 1887 to April 1888, and he thoroughly enjoyed this, his second, short holiday, and relaxation from the constant employment and hard work which had hitherto been his lot. No one enjoyed out-of-door sports more thoroughly than he did, especially shooting and fishing. He was rather too heavy for hunting; but he was a very good quick shot, and he had plenty of invitations to shoot — far more than he could accept. He was always a welcome guest at any party or entertainment: his genial manners, his humour, his love of fun, and his wide general information and knowledge of the world, made him a charming companion, and a great accession to any party of sport or pleasure; and he and Lady Tryon paid many pleasant visits to their friends during his brief holiday. It seems rather hard that a man who was so very fond of sport, and who had some of the best shooting and fishing in England and Scotland at his command, should have had such very limited opportunity of enjoying it, and should have been fated to spend so much of his time at sea; and even when on shore, to be glued to a desk, and constantly employed with the details of office

work. It is some consolation, however, to reflect that men so situated, when they *do* get sport, enjoy it a hundred-fold more than those who have plenty of leisure and make it the business of their lives.

Tryon had one peculiar — though perhaps not actually singular—taste. He was very fond of his mother-in-law—in fact, he seems to have been quite devoted to her; and whatever part of the world he was in, his home letters almost invariably convey some kind message to her. Lady Willoughby de Eresby must have been a very charming person, kind, sympathetic, and blessed with a large amount of common-sense—one of those natures that seem to invite confidence, and never betray it. She reciprocated the attachment of her son-in-law, and was very fond and very proud of him. She died in November 1888, after a long illness, at Grimsthorpe in Lincolnshire, where Sir George and Lady Tryon used often to stay.

During one of his visits to Grimsthorpe Tryon had a very bad fall: he was climbing up into an attic over the stable to look at some harness, and slipped and fell, and broke his left arm above the elbow, chipped his elbow, and strained badly the muscles of his shoulder. He suffered a good deal from this injury, and was more or less crippled by it for a long time afterwards. The weak arm came against him on several occasions, but it was not able to curb his restless energy.

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CHAPTER XIII.

ADMIRAL SUPERINTENDENT OF RESERVES.

In April 1888 Sir George Tryon was appointed to the important post of Admiral Superintendent of Reserves. He was as active and energetic in this post as he had been in all the other positions which he had occupied; and the work he did there, and the reforms he effected, were of the highest importance and the most enduring character.

Besides the ordinary duties of his office he was chairman of a committee on coastguard buildings in 1888, and also chairman of a committee on the "Royal Naval Reserves" in 1891. In the latter subject he took the greatest interest at all times, and he attached much importance to the value of our Mercantile Reserves in case of war, and was untiring in his efforts to bring the navy and mercantile marine into closer touch with each other, and to impress upon both how dependent they must necessarily be upon one another.

This was the third time that Tryon had held important posts at the Admiralty: first, as Private

Secretary to the First Lord; next, as Permanent Secretary; and now, as Superintendent of Reserves, which includes the whole of the coastguard service.

Much of the useful work which a naval officer performs in an office at the Admiralty is necessarily of a confidential nature, and does not come to the light in the same way as services performed afloat, though it may be—and often is—of great and permanent importance in the organisation and administration of the naval forces of the country. But in addition to his office work Tryon commanded squadrons in three annual manœuvres, and on all three occasions he showed the highest ability as a strategist.

The annual naval manœuvres, first started in 1885, were at the height of their popularity in 1888, 1889, and 1890. The novelty had not at all worn off, and both officers and men took the greatest interest in them, and occasionally got so excited over the mimic warfare that they were with difficulty prevented from coming to actual blows.

Notwithstanding the occasional absurdities which were perpetrated with regard to the bombardment and ransom of large and populous towns by one or two cruisers, the supposed capture of Atlantic liners by gun-vessels like the Spider, and some other similar vagaries on the part of imaginative commanding officers, the exercise afforded by the manœuvres was admitted by all competent authorities to be of the very greatest benefit to all

concerned, not only in strategy and tactics, but in the actual working of the interior economy of the ships, from the stokehole to the military top, under the conditions of assumed war, so far as it was possible to imitate them,—though of course it was well known to all save the wildest theorists that all kinds of mad pranks were played, which would not have been attempted in actual war. There was also a certain amount of fun and humour admitted into the proceedings, which did no harm, and imparted life and interest to the sham warfare, and helped to lighten the fatigue, which—especially in the case of the crews of some of the smaller vessels —must occasionally have been very great. But in addition to the excellent training and practice afforded to the officers and men of all ranks, and the practical testing of ships of various classes, some graver and more momentous lessons were taught by the manœuvres which took place about this period. To put the matter plainly, the people of Great Britain were given an object-lesson which showed them that their navy was inadequate for their protection.

Whether or not it was intended to make the manœuvres — and especially those of 1888 — an object-lesson as to the insufficiency of the British navy, is a secret only known to those who formulated the plans, and decided upon the strength, of the opposing squadrons. But that the 1888 manœuvres did teach a wholesome lesson is an undoubted fact. It may be remembered that this year 1888 was a year of considerable agitation with regard to the

navy. The vigorous and sustained efforts of our neighbours across the Channel to challenge our naval supremacy called forth the earnest remonstrances of some of the ablest and most experienced of our admirals, against the apathy with which this portentous national danger appeared to be generally regarded. The late distinguished Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby was one of the leaders in this movement, and he was ably supported by some of his brother officers. Meetings were organised in the city of London and at other centres. The press took up the subject, and the 'Times' especially did yeoman service in awakening the country to a sense of the suicidal folly it was committing in letting its naval supremacy go by default.

Then came the naval manœuvres of 1888; and the lessons taught by these were admirably summarised and brought home to the minds of all thoughtful people by the report of the three admirals, which was published early in the following year.[1]

Broadly speaking, the general idea of the 1888 manœuvres was to test the practicability or otherwise of a blockade of an enemy's ports, as carried out during the old wars, but with modern ships and appliances: the blockading squadrons being of course decidedly stronger than the blockaded ones.

A maritime nation with whom hostilities are imminent prepares two squadrons in two ports,

[1] Admirals Sir William Dowell, Sir Vesey Hamilton, and Sir Frederick Richards were appointed to inquire into the manœuvres of 1888, and to report thereon.

some distance apart, ready to commence operations directly war is declared; but before their preparation has been completed, war breaks out, and a blockade of both ports is established.

The blockaded squadrons endeavour to escape, and to carry out certain pre-arranged operations. The blockading squadrons endeavour to prevent their escape; or should they fail to do so, they are to follow them up and try to capture or destroy them with their superior force.

Such were the main features of the problem set before the admirals who were to conduct the manœuvres of 1888; and although there were eight subsidiary problems which it was hoped might be solved (or at any rate have light thrown upon them),—such as the most efficient distribution of a blockading squadron; the best plan for maintaining communication between scouts and the main body of the fleet; most efficient plan of keeping the blockading squadron coaled, &c., &c.,—yet the main object was to test the possibility of blockade under modern conditions.

Tryon was in chief command of the blockaded squadrons; Admiral Baird of the blockaders. The two blockaded ports were Berehaven and Lough Swilly—Tryon himself being at the former, and his lieutenant, Admiral Fitz-Roy, at the latter. Baird's lieutenant was Admiral Rowley, and he was to blockade Lough Swilly, while Baird himself endeavoured to hem in Tryon.

Ireland was supposed to be the enemy's country,

and to be friendly to Tryon, while England and Scotland were friendly to Baird. Tryon at a very early stage of the proceedings christened himself the "Achill Admiral," and he was so known and called by the newspapers all through the proceedings, and his fleet as the "Achill fleet." It was a happy thought, as the term had no particular or too significant meaning.

In a private letter written a few days before the operations commenced, Tryon says he does not expect to be able to do anything against Baird, as the latter is so greatly superior in force. It was true that Baird had seven ironclads to Tryon's five at Berehaven, and Rowley had six to Fitz-Roy's four at Lough Swilly, and the superiority of cruisers on the side of the blockaders was also considerable; but, on the other hand, Tryon was in constant telegraphic communication with his lieutenant at Lough Swilly, and could make or alter his plans and combinations with great rapidity, while Baird could only communicate with Rowley by sea: and there was also to be considered the great wear and tear—to both ships and men—of being at sea, blockading, the initiative being in the hands of the enemy; while the latter could lie comfortably in harbour, take his own time, create false alarms, worry and harass without serious intent, and finally, when the blockaders were worn out, and sick of the cry of "Wolf, wolf!" make the actual attempt to break the blockade. This was the strategy that Tryon carried out, and it was successful.

Hostilities commenced on the 24th of July, and Tryon worried his enemy until the 3d of August, when at 10 P.M. he broke through the blockade with three of his fast ships — the Warspite, Iris, and Severn. His own flagship the Hercules was not fast enough to run the blockade, so he had to remain at anchor for the present; but he had made all his arrangements with his second in command (Fitz-Roy at Lough Swilly), and the latter broke the blockade on the following day, August 4, with his flagship the Rodney and two other ships, and met the Berehaven contingent at a prearranged rendezvous.

Baird's scouts quickly discovered that the blockade had been broken by several of the enemy's ships; and his position then having become quite untenable, he raised the blockade of both ports, sent Rowley to defend Liverpool, and proceeded himself to Portland to coal, and to be ready to protect the mouth of the Thames and the metropolis of the empire.

In the meantime Fitz-Roy, with the two sections of the Achill fleet which had broken the blockade, proceeded round the north coast of Scotland and destroyed Aberdeen, Grimsby, Newcastle, and other ports, with their shipping, and then returned to Lough Swilly.

Tryon on the raising of the blockade left Berehaven on the 5th, and went to Lough Swilly, where he joined the remainder—that is, the slow ships—of his own second division; the fast ships having gone raiding with Fitz-Roy. He then went to Liverpool

and destroyed the shipping, and claimed to have captured the Belleisle, which was there guarding the port.

Baird then united his forces, and fell back on the Downs and remained there for the protection of London, until the cessation of hostilities, Tryon being practically in command of the English Channel, all the trade, and all the coast of England and Scotland except the mouth of the Thames, until hostilities ceased on the 20th August.

There was, of course, a good deal of imagination about the various operations, as there always must be about mimic warfare; but the lessons taught were of the first importance. It was shown that blockades carried on under the old conditions were impossible — at any rate, without a very much greater superiority of force than Baird possessed over Tryon. And it was clearly demonstrated what mischief a squadron of fast ships could do when they had once broken the blockade. These facts were brought home to the minds of all men who read their newspapers; and the argument was clinched by the report of the three admirals, which has been previously alluded to.

This report was a long one, and entered exhaustively into many technical subjects, but some of the concluding paragraphs are worth quoting, as it is in some respects a historical document. The admirals say:—

"The main lesson which these manœuvres emphasise is that Great Britain, whose maritime

supremacy is her life, is very far from being as strong as she should be on the seas, either in *personnel* or *matériel*.

"If England could 'consistently with national honour' control the question of peace or war, there would be no need for haste in bringing up her naval forces to the standard required for insuring, under Providence, a successful issue to a struggle for the freedom of the seas; but as there seems nothing to support the belief that she would have any option in the matter, when it suited another great Power to challenge her maritime position, we are decidedly of opinion that no time should be lost in placing her navy beyond comparison with that of any two Powers. . . .

"No other nation has any such interest in the maintenance of an undoubted superiority at sea as has England, whose seaboard is her frontier.

"England ranks among the Great Powers of the world by virtue of the naval position she has acquired in the past, and which has never been seriously challenged since the close of the last great war.

"The defeat of her navy means to her the loss of India and her Colonies, and of her place among the nations.

"Without any desire to question the sums annually granted by Parliament for the maintenance of the Services, we cannot but note the disproportion in the appropriation when the magnitude of the issues involved is taken into consideration.

"It would, in our opinion, be far more in consonance with the requirements of the nation by the provision of an adequate fleet to render invasion an impossibility than to enter into costly arrangements to meet an enemy on our shores (instead of destroying his 'Armadas' off our shores), for under the conditions in which it would be possible for a Great Power to invade England, nothing could avail her, as, the command of the sea once being lost, it would not require the landing of a single man upon her shores to bring her to an ignominious capitulation, for by her navy she must stand or fall."

Such were the concluding words of the report of the three admirals (Sir William Dowell, Sir Vesey Hamilton, and Sir Frederick Richards). They were momentous words, and the sentiments expressed therein have found many an echo, in pamphlets, leading articles, and speeches both in and out of Parliament.

The admirals said that "no time should be lost in placing her navy beyond comparison with that of any two Powers." But our parliamentary rulers were satisfied with a standard of equality with any two Powers, meaning of course the two next strongest Powers.

It is not proposed to enter into a discussion here as to what our comparative naval strength should be in order to render this country reasonably safe in case of war with a strong maritime Power, or

a possible combination of several; but it is certain that no one was more emphatic than Tryon in his expressions of opinion as to the absolute necessity for Great Britain to maintain a preponderating navy.

Having opened the subject of naval manœuvres, it will probably be convenient to allude briefly to the three manœuvres upon which Tryon was engaged, before passing on to other matters which engaged his attention during the time he held the appointment of Superintendent of Reserves.

The plan of the manœuvres of 1889 differed from those of 1888 in so far that no actual blockade was attempted; but the problem was embodied in the idea that the British fleet should endeavour to mask, from a strategic base, the forces of an enemy, whose two fortified ports and places of assembly were Queenstown and Berehaven, and the latter on his part was to endeavour to raid the coasts of Great Britain, to capture British merchant-ships, and if possible to catch a portion of the British fleet at a disadvantage.

The two principal antagonists were the same as before, Tryon and Baird; but they had changed places: Tryon was now the British Admiral and Baird the enemy. Their seconds in command were also changed, Tryon having Tracey as his second, and Baird having D'Arcy Irvine. Both the Commanders-in-Chief had slow ships for their flagships, and both the Rear-Admirals had fast ships.

Baird's headquarters were at Queenstown, and Tryon's at Milford Haven, which he afterwards shifted to Falmouth.

The principal features of these manœuvres consisted—first, of an attempt by Baird's fast battleships to rush the Thames, by proceeding separately and by different routes to a rendezvous off Dover, and there uniting; secondly, of the sealing up by Tryon of Baird's slow ships (including his own flagship) in Queenstown; thirdly, of the raiding operations of D'Arcy-Irvine with the Anson, Collingwood, and Inflexible on the East Coast of Scotland and England; and fourthly, of the capture of the Collingwood and Inflexible on the day before the cessation of hostilities.

The attempt of Baird's fast ships, under D'Arcy-Irvine, to evade Tryon's ships and get up Channel by different routes was frustrated, and the Camperdown, Hero, and Immortalité were captured.

There were all kinds of subsidiary operations, such as attacks on unfortified Irish ports, the defence by submarine mines of Lough Swilly by the Hecla and Inflexible; the independent operations of cruisers on both sides; and, finally, the raiding operations, and destruction of shipping and open towns on the East Coast by the squadron under D'Arcy-Irvine. The ultimate fate of this squadron was remarkable, and was supposed to have taught a lesson in strategy. The Anson and Collingwood (both fast ships), after their unsuccessful attempt to rush the English Channel,

were, after filling up with coal, sent round the north of Scotland, and inflicted heavy ransoms on Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and other towns; and they were on their way back to their own country by the same route when they met the slow but powerful Inflexible, which had been ordered round there from Lough Swilly by a telegram from Baird, who was himself blockaded in Queenstown by a superior force.

D'Arcy-Irvine, with the addition of this third first-class battleship, considered his squadron strong enough to undertake further operations on the East Coast,—a course that he was evidently justified in taking, as he was doubtless aware that Tryon's principal squadron was blockading Baird in Queenstown. So D'Arcy-Irvine proceeded south again, looked in at Edinburgh, hoping to catch some of the enemy's ships there, but finding none, went on to the southward; bombarded Newcastle, Sunderland, and other towns; and on the afternoon of the 28th of August—the day before hostilities were to cease—when off Scarborough, the weather being rather thick and hazy, the squadron met a squadron of the enemy under Rear-Admiral Tracey, consisting of the Rodney, Howe, Ajax, two belted cruisers, and one protected cruiser. D'Arcy-Irvine ordered a retreat, and the three ships made off to the northward at their best speed; but the slow Inflexible was quickly caught, surrounded, and captured. The Collingwood was caught shortly afterwards, and the Anson with

the Rear-Admiral alone escaped. The manœuvres ended on the following day.

Tryon had been duly informed of D'Arcy-Irvine's depredations on the East Coast, and sent a powerful detachment to interrupt him, and interrupt him it did, capturing two out of three of his ships.

The umpires for these manœuvres were four in number. Two of them — viz., Admirals Bowden-Smith and Morant — were on the "B" side, or Baird's fleet; and the other two — viz., Admirals Lord Charles Scott and Sir R. Molyneux — were on the "A" side, or Tryon's fleet.

The "A" umpires found as follows: "'A's' success was unquestionable; but his fleet was not strong enough to admit of his protecting the East Coast of Scotland, nor were his cruisers sufficiently numerous to adequately protect commerce; but the enemy's losses would have given 'A' a freer hand if operations had lasted. A large number of merchant-ships were captured by 'B.'"

Admirals Bowden-Smith and Morant found that "the attempted raid on the Downs, Thames, &c., was unsuccessful. The Anson-Collingwood trip was successful up to the time that two of the squadron were captured and the Anson chased off. The success of 'B' seems to have been in his cruiser work; six of these having captured ninety-five merchant-ships of 162,000 tons, without having been captured by 'A,' though chased on several occasions."

Tryon was as keen as possible to win these war

games, in three of which he took a leading part; but he was a generous adversary.

Speaking of these manœuvres some years afterwards, Lord Charles Scott says: "I recollect, in connection with the manœuvres of 1889, when I was an umpire, that Tryon was most anxious everything should be as fair as possible, and after I had ruled the Camperdown — commanded by King—out of action and captured, he asked me if I could not find a loop-hole, so that he might let King (his enemy) go back; but I could see no other conclusion under the rules than the one I had come to."

The manœuvres of 1890 were the most uninteresting of the whole series. The principal object was declared to be as follows: To ascertain under what conditions a hostile fleet could maintain itself on an important trade-route, and interrupt the traffic, always endeavouring to avoid a general engagement; also under what conditions a slightly superior British fleet could successfully manœuvre to bring the hostile force to action, or compel it to return to port. There were also several subsidiary objects, which need not be dwelt upon.

Tryon was again in command of the fleet which was supposed to be the British fleet, and again he had Tracey as his second in command; but this time his opponent was Sir Michael Seymour, who had Admiral Robinson as his second in command.

The enemy's fleet was given twenty-four hours' start, and moved off to the westward of what is

called the Chops of the Channel. Reconnoitring with cruisers was permitted before hostilities actually commenced; but the British fleet was not allowed to leave its ports in England until the hostile fleet had been twenty-four hours clear away from Berehaven in the extreme west of Ireland.

Tryon's task was on this occasion an impossible one. He might as well have hunted for a needle in a bundle of hay as go and look for Sir Michael Seymour in the wide Atlantic. Seymour had nothing to do but to keep out of his way and avoid him, which was not a difficult matter with a squadron of equally fast ships and a good supply of cruisers, so long as his coal lasted. Coal was the real question: and Sir Michael Seymour proved the possibility of coaling at sea in the North Atlantic; but the fact that he was enabled to do so, under exceptionally favourable circumstances, did not appear to prove that it would be always, or even generally, possible.

There was an attack on the British fleet by hostile torpedo-boats from a base at Alderney, which the umpires decided was unsuccessful; and there was a good deal of useful information gained in the practical work of scouting with fast cruisers: but the main body of the two hostile fleets never got within 300 miles of each other. Seymour simply went to the position which he had selected on one of the principal trade-routes, and being able to coal his ships at sea, he maintained that position until

the time given for the cessation of hostilities. Tryon was heard to complain that he thought his adversary would have played what he was pleased to call a more sporting game, and tried a little closer manœuvring; but Sir Michael Seymour was not so soft as to do anything of the kind: he played the game he was sent to play, successfully, and avoided an action, as he was distinctly told to do. It is true that Tryon with his fleet and cruisers protected the entrance to the English Channel; but if Seymour was enabled—as he certainly was—to intercept a large amount of the traffic some 300 miles farther to the westward, the protection on the interior lines would not appear to have been of much use.

It has already been observed that there was a good deal of imagination in all the naval manœuvres, as there always must be in sham warfare of all kinds. But many of the absurdities were rendered still more absurd by the fact that some of the combatants declined to play by the rules. In some instances they thought it rather fine to go on fighting after their ships had been sunk (according to the rules) half-a-dozen times over; and one admiral went so far as to censure one of his captains for striking his colours after being under an overwhelming fire for twenty minutes, the rules saying that fifteen minutes was the time in which a ship was to consider herself out of action under the circumstances. It was very much as if in a game of chess one of the players was to decline to

allow one of his pieces to be removed from the board, notwithstanding that it had been fairly taken. The "dashing behaviour" of some of the torpedo-boat commanders was also considered—by some critics—to be highly commendable; entirely forgetful of the fact that they were not really being fired at, and ought therefore—if there was to be any element of common-sense in the evolutions—to have played according to the rules.

The British naval manœuvres called forth many criticisms, of various degrees of ability, from both home and foreign critics. Perhaps one of the ablest of these was an article by Vice-Admiral Batsch, of the German navy, published in the 'Deutsche-Revue,' November and December 1889. His criticisms are applied to the manœuvres of both 1888 and 1889. After pointing out clearly the large element of unreality which entered into "the British sea war-games," he is most emphatic in his condemnation of the strategy of evasion, or, in other words, of squadrons dodging superior forces in order to make attacks on open towns; and he argues that such a policy never has been, and never can be, successful, or produce any real effect upon the issues of a naval war, the main object of which should be to gain a decisive victory over the organised forces of the enemy before any subsidiary operations are undertaken.

Admiral Batsch's remarks on this subject are very interesting, and worthy of quotation. With special reference to the rush for the mouth of the Thames

by Baird's fast ships on different routes in the 1889 manœuvres, he says:—

"As the representation of tactical defeat which leads in war to a crisis is not feasible, the 'general idea' takes another direction, and what in actual warfare at sea would only follow upon a general engagement being therefore of secondary importance (we mean the coast attack), becomes the principal aim. Hence arises the fault that such attacks on the coast, or rather on harbours, are undertaken, although the enemy's main strength is still unbroken. In order to arrive at this end, all means must be employed to avoid meeting the enemy's main force; and whereas in actual warfare all instructions are calculated to produce a meeting with it, and to break it up, in sham war the whole thing turns upon stratagems and clever dodges, by means of which you manage to follow the rules of the game. According to these the undisturbed possession of a harbour for eight hours constitutes a victory. In order to prevent the enemy from gaining such a victory in the Thames, the English admiral in 1888 steamed thither with all his force after the Irish fleet had slipped out from the harbour which he was blockading, and meanwhile the western ports were requisitioned behind his back. This time the Irish admiral was not blockaded, and could go where he liked, and so planned an attack on the Thames. As, when you have to avoid your enemy, speed becomes the principal thing, he kept back the slower ships of his fleet, and despatched

the faster ships in two divisions by different routes, so as to escape notice. Either by mere accident or by the remarkable ability of his opponent [Tryon], the separate divisions fell in with superior forces of the enemy, and three ships had to strike their flags, in obedience to the manœuvre rules—that is to say, nearly half the attacking squadron. The stratagem was discovered, and the plan had to be given up, a further result being that the Irish fleet, which was originally about 25 per cent weaker than that of England, became now less than its opponent by 43 per cent, and in consequence all ideas of plans on a large scale had to be given up.

"The fault inherent in the plan which failed has already been noticed: but its unfortunate execution teaches us that an admiral should not divide his strength in the presence of the unbroken and united force of the enemy; that he should not leave that force out of consideration; and that attempts to elude such an unbroken force are very objectionable. Thus the capture of the Hero, Camperdown, and Immortalité was the first great incident of this war-game, and, for that reason, of interest, because it gave the English admiral, Tryon, the opportunity of a movement which hindered the junction of the enemy's divisions, and afforded a victory to Tracey, his second in command."

The above is a very fair criticism of the events which have been already referred to; and although it must be admitted that the rules of the game were not always strictly adhered to, there is no reason to

doubt that a careful consideration of what was and what was not admissible by the rules guided the strategic plans of the admirals rather than what would or would not be admissible in war. This is inevitable in all sham warfare, and is no reproach to any one concerned—neither those who framed the rules nor those who had to be guided by them. The only mistake is in supposing that any rules can be made which will simulate the real conditions of war in its most essential features. All that sensible people look for is a game which will prove to be a useful, an interesting, and an exhilarating exercise, which will make people think, and perhaps talk—in fact, produce a general interest in the problems of naval warfare—and this our naval manœuvres certainly have done.

It was almost inevitable that in a popularly governed country, where everybody wants to know everything, the manœuvres should have been looked upon as a national show for the benefit of the British public, who, as they were paying for the show, wanted to know all about it from day to day, and expected to see every morning in their newspaper exactly what each side was doing, and why they did it, and also what they were going to do; and as spies are not hanged during peace manœuvres, the British public was usually gratified.

With reference to the manœuvres of 1890, which, as already remarked, were certainly the least interesting, from a popular point of view, of the series in which Tryon was engaged, he says of them in a

private letter: "Though the manœuvres of 1890 have not been very sensational, they have been very useful to officers and men, quite as much so as in previous years." And again: "For all useful purposes the manœuvres this year were the best I have had; for the press and for sensation, the worst."

Brief allusion was made in the early part of this chapter to the useful work that Tryon did in perfecting our system of Naval Reserves, and in bringing both the officers and men of the Mercantile Marine into closer touch with the Royal Navy. He was chairman of the committee appointed to inquire into and report upon the whole subject; and the final report of the committee was submitted in 1891, the year that Tryon ceased his connection with the Reserves, and took command of the Mediterranean station.

The committee was a strong one, including such names as Allen Young, C. Rivers Wilson, Thos. H. Ismay, and two or three naval officers. It went very exhaustively into the subject, collecting a large amount of evidence from various sources, and the report, which was printed as a confidential document, is of great interest. Tryon was the moving spirit in this committee, and his special views and language can be traced in every paragraph of the report, which has since become the working foundation of our present system of Reserves.

England has passed through various phases of thought and action in supplying her navy with men in times of emergency, of which the press-

gang and the offering of bounties are the two most notable.

The pressgang appears to be out of the question in the present day: it was a barbarous and unjust method at the best of times, and even more objectionable and contrary to the spirit of a free people than the universal conscription which is carried out on the Continent.

The bounty system is also very objectionable, as well as being very wasteful, and it attracts many useless characters ready to desert on the first opportunity.

The problem of manning the navy is as old as the navy itself. Many plausible arguments have been advanced to show that England ought logically to enforce a universal maritime conscription as a reply to the military conscriptions in force on the Continent, seeing that she must stand or fall by her navy: but the idea is repugnant to the great majority of the people; and if it is within the bounds of possibility to man the navy on the voluntary principle, it is for many reasons better to do so.

The problem is, and always has been, a very complicated one, involving, as it does, so many diverse interests. Moreover, it is constantly changing, as the conditions of naval requirements and the constitution of our mercantile marine change. For, at whatever period of our naval history we look at the question, we shall see that the eyes of our administrators have ever been fixed upon our mer-

chant navy as the source from which they hoped to fill up the ranks of the Royal Navy in time of need, either by force or persuasion.

Probably the greatest shock that was ever given to the minds of those who look upon the merchant navy of England as a practically inexhaustible mine from which the Royal Navy may supply its wants, was given by the disclosure of the fact that foreigners are largely taking the place of our own countrymen in both steamers and sailing-ships trading under the British flag, and owned by British owners. This was pointed to as a sure sign of the decay of our nautical pre-eminence. But up to the present time it does not seem to have produced the disastrous effects which were expected of it. We still have a Reserve of seamen, which, if not so large on paper as that of some of our neighbours, has at any rate sea-experience; and they are all volunteers.

The reorganisation, the popularisation, and the general improvement of this force was a subject well worthy of Tryon's talent and energy and administrative powers; and he worked at it with his characteristic zeal.

In the old days of sailing-ships, if a man was a sailor he could very soon be turned into a useful man-of-war's man. The handling of sails was the main point, and the gun-drills and smallarm-drills were very secondary considerations. Of course a merchant seaman did not even then drop into his place at once, as he had to learn a new sort of discipline, smartness, &c.; but he was very much

nearer to his work than a merchant seaman imported suddenly into the Royal Navy to-day would be, without previous training: hence it becomes necessary to institute all our elaborate arrangements of drill-ships and batteries for training a certain number of men, and also to give them a retaining fee, and some other advantages, with the view of ensuring their services on a sudden emergency.

Doubts have often been expressed as to whether our Reserves (both naval and military) would respond promptly to the call in case of war. Tryon's committee, after making themselves thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances of the men, and their aspirations and sentiments, express the opinion that there is no reason to doubt that they will answer loyally to their engagements whenever called upon; and it is not unlikely that they will prove to be as good fighting material as men forced to serve through enrolment in a maritime conscription, or men dragged into the service by the old-fashioned pressgang. The proof of this pudding, however, can only be in the eating; and we may make any speculations we like in the meantime.

The question of stokers—or "firemen," as they call them—was a very important one in the deliberations of the committee. A large proportion of the complement of a modern man-of-war is made up of the engine-room staff, and they are of at least as much importance as the so-called seamen, who, as a rule, are not seamen at all, but simply sea-gunners; very

highly trained, no doubt, and exactly what are required for fighting a modern man-of-war, in conjunction with a certain number (and, it may be added, a considerable and constantly increasing number) of skilled mechanics, and firemen to keep up a good head of steam.

The difficulty with the stokers appears to lie in the fact that the best of them do not care to join the Naval Reserve for the sake of a small retaining fee, and be under the obligation to come out whenever called upon. They prefer to wait, and "take their chance when the time comes"; meaning, that they expect, if there is a war, there will be a large bounty offered, and that skilled hands would also be able to command a high rate of wages in case of a national emergency. Not perhaps very patriotic, but still astute, from their own point of view.

There was one point upon which Tryon did not agree with the majority of his committee, and that was concerning the dress of the Royal Naval Reserve men. The question of dress may seem to some to be a very trivial matter so long as the men themselves are of good quality, but Tryon did not consider it so; he attached very great importance to it, and evidently regarded it as one of those subtle sentiments of human nature which, although men, at any rate, do not care to acknowledge them, yet exercise considerable influence over their thoughts and feelings, and hence over their actions also. He was most anxious that the Reserve men, when called out for training, should wear a dress as

nearly as possible the same as men of the regular navy, and thought that any deviation from this would be looked upon as a badge of inferiority. He evidently felt very strongly on this point, and in a semi-official letter to the First Lord he gives his views on the subject as follows:—

"I am, unfortunately perhaps, one of those who attach importance to *esprit de corps*, and to the adoption of all reasonable measures for increasing the respect that R.N.R. men have for the service and also for themselves, and, further, to look forward to the possibility that any day they may be called on to serve alongside and with the men of the Royal Navy, of which they form a part. I assume the object is, and should be, to make the Reserve as nearly equal as possible in efficiency to the permanent force, and I believe it to be the object with all nations to do everything possible to make the Reserves take their place naturally and easily alongside their comrades. There will be no difference between man and man during war. On board it will be the best man up. Those in the navy proper, no doubt,—especially in some ships of novel construction,—will be especially expert. Those in the Reserve will bring with them other experiences beyond those due only to Royal Naval training that will not be without value; and I do not mind going so far as to say our seamen of the R.N. of to-day are not so hard or so helpful as they used to be. It is probably due to the fact that from boyhood up they have been so cared for, and

their every want attended to; and this forms, perhaps, the only weak point in our continuous-service system.

"I well remember that men who had long experience in the mercantile marine, who were in the Naval Brigade in the Crimea, came conspicuously to the front as stalwart, helpful men of power and endurance; and so I feel sure would be the case again, and probably more conspicuously so. I well remember several conversations on this point with my friend the late Sir William Hewett, who probably had more war experience than any of his contemporaries; he was very strong on this point. . . . Personally I am not in the least wedded to any particular form of dress, so long as it is markedly similar to that they would wear on board when embarked — viz., to that of men in the Royal Navy."

He then goes on to say that he has consulted numbers of people who are qualified to give an opinion as to the feelings of the R.N.R. men on the subject, and they all agree with him in thinking that to make any marked distinction in their dress would be a great mistake, "as stamping them, as it were, with a badge of inferiority during a time of peace. It is inconsistent, because the distinctive dress would be removed should the occasion ever arise, such as is the cause of the existence of the force, when they would serve alongside our seamen in the fleet on terms of perfect equality in every respect."

There are some who are inclined to doubt the value of the Royal Naval Reserve, in view of the high technical training which is required for working a modern ship of war, and think that the money spent upon it would be better expended in strengthening the regular naval forces of the country. It is unnecessary to argue the point here. Tryon at any rate had no doubts upon the subject, and was a firm believer in the seamen of the Reserve. Whether he had the same faith in the efficiency of the officers of the R.N.R. does not appear by his writings.

It was during the time that Tryon was in charge of the Reserves that the agitation took place which led to the famous Naval Defence Act of 1889, by which the country undertook to spend 21 millions upon building seventy ships of war in five years, ten of them to be battleships. There was, as might be expected, considerable discussion as to the designs of these battleships, and Tryon amongst others was consulted on the subject. He was very emphatic as to the necessity of a high freeboard, and the consequent ability of the ships to steam head to wind in rough water; he considered that 23 feet was the least height admissible for the axis of the guns of the principal armament to be above the water-line, and that 380 feet between the perpendiculars was the least length that should be accepted. Our naval readers may remember that these were the figures which were finally adopted in the new designs, except in the case of the Hood,

which, being a turret instead of a barbette ship, had to be satisfied with considerably lower guns, accepting in lieu the better protection which is supposed to be afforded by the turret system.

Tryon was a strong opponent of monster guns, and considers a gun of about 45 tons weight sufficient for all purposes. He says the 100-ton guns were forced upon us by scientists and manufacturers, and that the navy never asked for them or wanted them. This may be the case, speaking in general terms; but the navy was not unanimous on the subject, and it is scarcely to be expected that they should be. It would, perhaps, be more accurate to say that the 100-ton gun was sent afloat in deference to a certain class of public opinion. Some of our readers may possibly remember the kind of argument that was used on this subject. It was pointed out that another nation (Italy) was preparing to mount 100-ton guns afloat; that the value of them was an unknown quantity; that they might prove to be all-powerful; and that in view of this doubt it was very unwise for a country situated like Great Britain to be without them. This was really the argument that sent the 100 tons afloat in British ships. It is easy now to be wise after the event; but Tryon appears from the first to have been opposed to the very big guns.

It is certain that if a really good gun of about 12 inches calibre and 50 tons weight had been in existence in England in 1889, the "new battleships" of that date — viz., the Royal Sovereign

class—would have been armed with it; but no such gun was in existence, while on the other hand we had the 68-ton gun of 13·5 calibre, with all its details worked out. It was ready, and the ideal gun was not ready, and could not be got ready in time, therefore the former was adopted; but the latter has since been made, and the "new battleships" of 1893 design are armed with it. It is a wire-gun, and probably one of the best in the world.

One of the duties of the Admiral Superintendent of Reserves is to visit all the coastguard stations in Great Britain and Ireland, and all the drill-ships of the R.N.R. Tryon enjoyed these visiting tours, for although they were hard work and involved some fatiguing journeys, they were a relief from the monotony of office work, and gave him an opportunity of seeing something of his own country, a country concerning which most naval officers know very little, as they are nearly always out of it.

The assumption by Tryon of the title "Achill Admiral" has already been alluded to in an early part of this chapter. It was during the 1888 manœuvres that he used this term; and for the sake of adding some life, and as much reality as possible, to the mimic warfare, he assumed that he belonged to the independent kingdom of Achill, which was at war with another powerful maritime country.

It was shortly after the conclusion of these 1888 manœuvres that Tryon took up his parable and wrote an account of the defensive forces of the

imaginary kingdom of Achill; and as it is obvious that this parable contains his views upon some important questions of national defence, and of the proper organisation and use of the Reserves, it will not be without interest if we quote some of it. It will be seen that he did not mean to indicate France or England, or any other country specially; but that the kingdom of Achill was a purely ideal State, a maritime Power with certain far-reaching interests, which he as Admiral of the Achill fleet was suddenly called upon to defend.

"ACHILL.

"The people of the island of Achill, which with that of Rutland form the territory of the kingdom of Achill, are an ancient and interesting race. Their military organisation is complete. They look to the sea for a harvest, but are in all respects self-contained for all essential purposes of existence.

"War suddenly broke out in 1888, by an act of war perpetrated by a neighbouring Power, who though more powerful at sea was not nearly so strong as a military Power. As a nation they are world-wide, and rely on being strong at sea for their protection against invasion, and for the maintenance of their trade, commerce, and colonies. To the Achill people these points are of far less importance. The superior strength of their army secured them against invasion by their neighbours, and as to commerce, trade, and colonies, they

involve no question of vital importance to the nation.

"At the outbreak of war I found myself in command of the Achill fleet: at that moment it happened to be divided between two ports, and the enemy at once asserted his numerical naval superiority by blockading both ports, which, however, were strongly defended against a direct naval attack; but no provision had been made to stave off an attack on the shipping within, if delivered by torpedo-boats, and I had, with much regret, in the first place to undertake this task with the resources of the fleet, for this practically diminished the strength of my fleet.

"The Achill Intelligence Department informed me of the strength of the enemy at sea, and of his resources.

"The army, proud of its tradition and history, burnt to be released from the limitations imposed upon it by the foreshores of their island home, and to enable me to exert the whole power of the fleet afloat spared no sacrifice on their part, for they recognised that until a superiority on the high seas was established, no field out of their own country was open to them.

"The people, who for long years had cheerfully borne the burden of an expenditure devoted to naval purposes, were most indignant when they found the naval forces of Achill were not equal to their present need: the Government of the day was hurled from office, new and untried men, the

loudest and most skilled agitators, were put to the fore, and at first there was much confusion. It was not the fault of one Administration that things were not as they should be—it was the fault of many successive ones; but the blow fell with most effect on those who happened to be in office, though they really had done much to rectify the baneful result of long years of Government that yielded to popular and political pressure, a pressure which at times no Minister could resist.

"It is now perhaps right that I should point out what had gone wrong, and why the large sums sanctioned in the annual naval budget had not provided a sufficient fleet.

"Some years back, as a principle, the Naval Department was held responsible not only for providing a fleet out of the sums voted annually for naval purposes, but for the defence of home ports; indeed, as a principle, for whatever could be employed against ships, or as a protection against an attack by ships. It was at that time in vain for naval men to say, as they did, 'The fleets of those to whom we may one day be opposed in war are rapidly increasing.' The voice of seamen was unheard in Parliament and in the country, and if any one raised a warning voice he was looked upon as somewhat of a bore.

"The defence section was always present in force. The defences were criticised by the public; and urged by the military voice, backed by local members, it was very strong and powerful in influencing

public opinion. Ships were built suited perhaps for aiding in defence, thus lessening the military votes; and the Achill Government had a considerable force of vessels suited for service in close waters, and of gun-vessels (carrying large guns), which are the largest and weakest and most vulnerable of gun-carriages, and the least reliable for defensive purposes; and the active fleet was small indeed.

"Fortunately a scare drew public attention to this, and after long discussion it was decided that the defences of the country should, especially as to the principles that directed expenditure, be placed in the hands of a Minister of Defence; and this was effected. Still, it is to be observed, 'Defence' was the guiding principle of administration.

"With the Minister of Defence began what may be termed the reign of joint commissions. Commissions and committees composed of naval and military men sat on every subject connected with the national forces. The military and political voice was all-powerful, and on one side; it led to but a repetition of the former 'rob-Peter-to-pay-Paul' state of affairs. Ports were defended by batteries that were insufficient for their purposes, and almost every report ended by some such expression: 'The Commission urge the instant construction of the works which are described in the schedule attached. They are aware that in themselves they are insufficient; but by the aid of armoured defence-vessels, and gun-

vessels, which the Naval Department should provide, they consider they will give a reasonable security, and obtain the result the Minister of Defence has expressed to us his desire to obtain.'

"It became clear the sea-going fleet was being starved, because it was called on to do that which could be more securely, and better, and at less cost, effected by other means.

"Fortunately another war seemed imminent, and this called the attention of the country to its sea-going force; it took stock of it, and compared what was at disposal with what it was likely to be opposed to: the result was not assuring, and it caused another change in the administrative system, which was only effected at great cost. The country spoke out and said it was determined to be strong at sea. The voice that spoke said, 'We live on an island; as a nation, if we are not strong at sea, we are nowhere when weighed among nations.' The result was that an Administration was formed, and within it was an Admiralty that was held responsible for the maintenance of the sea-going fleet. All defence questions, naval and military, were provided for in a somewhat elaborate system, which I will sketch.

"The Admiralty was held responsible primarily for the expenditure of such sums as were annually voted for purely naval purposes—viz., for the provision of the sea-going fleet. In the first instance, at the outbreak of a war, it was contemplated that the action of the fleet would be world-wide; but should the combinations against us be overpower-

ing, it would be less extended; and at all times when necessary it would actively co-operate with defence measures.

"Secondly, the Admiralty provides,—and entirely independent of the fleet usually kept near home, which was part of the active fleet available for service anywhere,—out of a fund annually voted, ships and a naval organisation that intimately worked in harmony with the military forces on well-established lines; and practically this part of the naval force never quitted the country till, at all events, the supremacy at sea was established, when they became invaluable as a part of the attacking force.

"The country was divided into districts. A general was placed in command, and on his staff was a naval officer who was responsible to keep him informed on all points connected with the coast defences provided under the naval system for his district, much in the same way as other members of his staff are responsible on the subjects specially assigned to them — viz., cavalry, artillery, infantry, &c.

"In each district the regular forces were the nucleus of the whole force, which was made up of the regular permanent forces of the country, and of the yeomanry, militia, and volunteers, and as a special feature of the system was a naval defence force. The members of the latter were in part taken from the standing navy; with them were associated Royal Naval Volunteers, and in addi-

tion there was, under a military organisation, a coast-defence force.

"I will now describe the composition of the Royal Naval Volunteer force, and of the coast-defence force.

"The Royal Naval Volunteers were divided into corps, the corps into companies and sections. While all were trained to big and quick-firing guns, and to rifles, some companies and sections were specially trained as torpedoists, others as artillerymen, others as skilled boatmen, others in handling, driving, and taking charge of steam-engines and boilers, and boats. Many yachtsmen entered this corps, and the keen interest they took in their work during peace tended to establish the high reputation they subsequently won when tried on service.

"The coast-defence force was raised partly in the principal seaports, and largely in the manufacturing and mining districts, and the companies and sections of the different corps were carefully arranged as to the qualifications of the men for the performance of duties other than those of a military character. Then each corps had a proportion of men skilled by practice obtained in their everyday life occupation in handling coal. When enrolled and so employed they received a coaling-suit, and a special rate of pay, which varied with the amount of coal handled, and the time occupied, and the actual amount of work done. There were also companies composed of

men who were artisans, and who, when employed at their trade, received a special rate of pay in addition to that they received as soldiers. These corps were very popular, and had the advantage of giving employment to a class of men who would be out of work during a period of war, but who largely assisted towards the maintenance of our fleet in full activity, and at the same time as soldiers they materially added to the strength of the garrisons of the seaports.

"In response to my application, ultimately 300 men of the coast-defence force and 100 of the Royal Naval Volunteers were sent to Berehaven, and the same number to Lough Swilly. They soon provided a good defence against torpedo attack; they established mine-fields, and batteries to protect them; they took entire charge of all the harbour defences, and a body of men were constantly employed on coaling duties, and forty coal-trimmers were always available. I found among other trades I had nineteen men skilled as boiler-makers and fitters available, and very useful work they did aiding vessels that required small defects to be made good. The Royal Naval Volunteers took special charge of the booms, and manned patrol-boats, and guarded the signal stations. The presence of these corps secured that the stay of ships of war in port was reduced to a minimum, while their efficiency at sea was maintained at a maximum; and further, so many volunteered for service afloat that I was enabled to

fill up all vacancies in the fleet as they occurred. In addition to the above, they armed and manned three powerful tugs, two of which patrolled each night outside the defences. These vessels were so formidable to torpedo-boats that the enemy once having tasted their quality took care not to try them again.

"The possession by the Achill Government of the two forces, organised and disciplined on the lines sketched above, enabled me to discount some of the enemy's vessels, for the Intelligence Department informed me that my opponent did not possess such forces. They virtually increased, for all practical purposes, my force, and to a corresponding extent lessened the comparative inferiority of it.

"It was clear from the first that the great changes which have occurred since the last naval war had not been sufficiently recognised. A fleet was formerly restrained by adverse winds, by want of wind, by contrary currents and the effects of tides: it is now free as to many considerations that were once binding. A fleet that in old days could spare one or two thousand men, and yet retain sufficient men on board to fight an action, can now spare but a few score, and can ill afford to spare so many. On the other hand, ships formerly could keep the seas for months, but now require to replenish with coal every few days. If a fleet is to be maintained in full efficiency it must be able to coal rapidly, and with ease to its crew,

on whom incessant day and night work devolves, and on whom so many new demands are made, and this can only be done when suitable arrangements and appliances are provided for the equipment and maintenance of the active fleet.

"The result of the new arrangement, which had only been in force three years when war broke out, had happily even then made itself felt.

"In the first instance, all concurred that the total war expenditure of all countries has some limit. It was decided that the active navy should be superior to any sea-going force that could within reason be combined against it by other nations; and further, that it should be equal to the task of giving a reasonable protection to our sea-going and distant interests.

"The limitation of expenditure was clear; it was dependent on the forces other nations chose to create: we regretted and begrudged the expenditure; but if our peaceful argument did not succeed in convincing others of the unwisdom and wrong in expending so much of the national income in creating forces not required for national defensive reasons, our hands were forced, and the country declared it was not prepared to rely on the forbearance of others for its national existence.

"The army it was decided to maintain was regulated by the following reasons: To be efficient in force; to provide for such demands as were likely to be made on us, due to our possession of distant responsibilities that we were bound

to maintain; and a sufficient force for home purposes.

"The navy proper, and the army proper, were the life, soul, and backbone of the defensive system.

"When a 'defence' question arose, it was considered on its merits in each case. If the defence was to be given by means of forts, mine-fields, and torpedoes, it was provided. In other—but very rare—cases, ships might be considered absolutely necessary to aid in affording adequate defence; in such cases they were provided.

"It was found that the above, which is but a sketch of the system, removed a temptation, that unquestionably existed before, for one department to endeavour to throw expenditure on another; while the precise responsibility of naval and military authority was clearly defined."

"The above" is evidently Tryon's ideal of a complete and comprehensive system of national defence for a maritime Power: but it will be observed that he has so sketched the position and the resources of the kingdom of Achill that criticism is to some extent disarmed, as no particular country is represented, but merely the general principles of national defence set forth, with a special emphasis upon the propriety of making full use of existing national resources and the organisation of reliable reserves, which latter at this time was his special business.

CHAPTER XIV.

NATIONAL INSURANCE.

THE subject of National Insurance was one to which Sir George Tryon gave much attention during the years 1889-90. He looked upon it as a question of the very highest importance, and one that should be fully considered during a time of peace, and all preliminary arrangements made, so that there should be no panic on the outbreak of war. He conversed much on the subject with his friends; and he also wrote about it both privately and publicly, and endeavoured to obtain the opinions of leading shipowners and merchants, and of others who had given thought and attention to the subject. He published an article in the 'United Service Magazine' for May 1890, entitled "National Insurance, a Practical Proposal"; and he also wrote a shorter memorandum setting forth his proposal, and distributed a large number of copies amongst all those who were likely to be interested in the subject, including many of his brother officers.

Tryon did not claim originality for his proposal

for a State insurance of merchant-ships in time of war: he acknowledges that the subject was mentioned to him by Admiral Hopkins some years previous to the time that he took it up and pushed it with his characteristic energy and perseverance.

In order to give the reader a clear idea of Tryon's proposal, and the arguments by which he supported it, it will be necessary to quote some passages from the article in the 'United Service Magazine,' and from the memorandum above referred to, although in point of fact the former is an amplification of the latter, with few exceptions. He says:—

"The pressing wants of this nation on the outbreak of a great naval war will force prominently to the front the following points:—

"*1st.* The supply of food, six-tenths of which is at present imported.

"*2d.* The import of raw material.

"*3d.* The export of manufactured goods.

"*4th.* How to protect our trade and commerce under the British flag.

"*5th.* How to maintain our commercial agencies throughout the world.

"*6th.* How to maintain in its integrity the eminent position we have attained, so that it will not permanently suffer from the effects of war.

"If we can safeguard the country on the above points thus briefly referred to, even though the cost might be considerable, it would be as nothing com-

pared to what the loss would be if it cannot be done. Should the object in view be attained, at the end of a war we should be able at once to resume our commercial position; we should have provided during the time the war lasted food for the masses, who are largely dependent on supplies brought from over the seas, and something at all events would have been effected towards enabling them to earn wages with which to buy the necessaries of life.

"In brief, the proposal is (subject to certain regulations and conditions) for the State to guarantee to pay the cost of vessels and cargoes destroyed by the enemy. The charges arising would, to some extent, be recovered indirectly if the market is supplied and trade maintained, for the rates and taxes would be far less than would otherwise be the case. . . .

"It may be asked, Why this new thing? The reply is, The conditions presented in this country are novel, not only among great nations, but new to us since the last great war, and they are such as to demand attention and, if necessary, exceptionally strong and new measures. No nation has at any time been so entirely dependent on the product of other countries as is Great Britain at this time.

"The facts that present themselves when the proposal is considered in its entirety will show that, provided vessels avoid positions that are dangerous owing to geographical conditions, and if other positions are guarded, it will not be so easy as some

think to greatly interfere with trade and commerce carried in reasonably fast vessels. It appears to be essential, however, in the interests of the nation, that the losses incurred by such vessels at the hands of the enemy should be borne by the State. If it is not, the sense of insecurity produced by the loss of a few vessels would be such that the rate of insurance to cover war-risks would become enormously high. For instance, it is clear that the loss of three vessels out of a hundred would send up the rate of insurance on all vessels to a ruinous height; but if the loss of those three vessels was borne by the State, it would be little felt, and indeed it would be more than recouped directly and indirectly by the nation, not only through the cargoes of the other ninety-seven vessels, but by the maintenance of trade and commerce in our hands. At the outset of a war a sense of insecurity causes an appreciation in value much in excess of risks really incurred."

After pointing out that we import eleven million tons of food every year, in addition to an enormous amount of raw material for our manufactures, and that there is not a sufficiency of neutral shipping in the world to supply our wants, and further, that even if our merchant-ships were transferred to neutral flags on the outbreak of war with the hope that they would be able to supply our wants, it is not likely that their neutrality would be acknowledged by the enemy, Tryon proceeds:—

"What is contraband of war is by no means settled. Some nations consider coal is, some con-

sider provisions are, and in case of war nations act first and talk afterwards, and we cannot expect other nations to go to war in support of views as to what is and what is not contraband, save when their own interests are materially affected, and not even always then.

"Supposing our wants are met in the main by our own ships, supplemented by neutral vessels, and the neutral vessels and cargoes are recognised as such, and are consequently not liable to be captured, the profits of the neutrals will be very great, while our vessels running war-risks would be at a serious disadvantage, and the result would be reflected in the loss of trade and commerce, and its departure to other flags. Would it ever return? History holds out no reliable hope on this score.

. . . . . .

"It is of no use saying how wrong and how wicked war is; facts are facts, and we must accept the world in which we live as it is. History tells us war does not necessarily fall on those who have failed to keep international obligations: the ill-will which precedes war may arise from many causes; among others from ambition, from envy, from internal as well as from external causes. History also tells us war is apt to come suddenly, without notice; and those most liable to be assaulted are those who are most open to attack, those who have that to lose and to yield that others envy and want."

Tryon then proceeds to amplify and illustrate his argument for State insurance, though he sees clearly

the direction from which he may expect opposition to the scheme, and endeavours to forestall the arguments of his assumed opponents. Thus :—

"I am aware there are objections entertained to interference at any time by the State in commercial matters: no doubt the most enterprising feel themselves equal to any occasion, and only watch opportunities; but surely this may be carried too far. No one can speak with practical experience upon the whole question: it has never been put to the test. The conditions are new; they are the result of energy, enterprise, industry, and prosperity, and of a long-protracted peace, only checkered by wars that have not disadvantageously affected our mercantile marine.

"I have tried to refer to national requirements only, and have avoided obscuring the question with masses of figures. The proposal is distinctly not in the interest of any particular section of the community: it has for its object solely the safeguarding of the interests of the nation at large. Shipowners, and merchants, and traders, who would not be affected under any conditions of State insurance, will naturally not regard it with favour. It may be said with much truth that any scheme of national insurance effected under any conditions of rules would be inequitable. With this I have nothing to do: besides, inequitable to whom? To the owners who are not insured. The real point is, would it be effective, would it do what is required, would it be not in the interest of individuals but of the nation,

would it serve to tide over a space and secure for the country what it requires till energy and enterprise have had time to develop new methods? It is quite possible by-and-by so many fast ships would spring into existence that a system of State insurance would no longer be required.

. . . . . .

"I have only indicated in this paper what it appears to me is required; the proposal made is set forth suggestively, the particular plan may possibly be shown to be full of economic fallacies, and a far better system may be suggested. I care not for the plan, I only want the result. I, for one, am not content to sit down and accept the statements I have been compelled to read. I do not believe them, nor will I give them the assent that might be assumed if they are only met by silence."[1]

Tryon's proposal gave rise to an immense amount of discussion. Not only the leading London daily papers, and all the naval and military journals, but the provincial papers also, took it up and discussed it. The 'Times' was decidedly unfavourable to the proposal, and in a leading article on the 5th September 1890 it states the case from an opposite point of view in the following emphatic terms: "It is no part of the duty of the State to interfere with the internal distribution of loss and gain. That is

[1] The statements to which he alludes seem to be those made in some quarters about this period, to the effect that we should not be able in any circumstances to protect our trade under our own flag in case of war with a maritime Power, and that it would therefore naturally pass to the flag of neutrals who would still supply our wants.

very much better managed by economical forces, interference with which is mischievous when it ceases to be merely futile. But it is most distinctly and emphatically the duty of the State to use every effort to prevent the destruction of capital by the enemy. When a ship is destroyed, it is in the first instance an individual loss, but that must not blind us to the fact that it is also a reduction from the national resources. It is a dead loss to the country as well as to the individual, and it remains a dead loss, no matter to what account it is debited. It is the function of the navy to prevent that loss, whether by wholesale attacks upon our shores or by detailed depredations among our merchant-ships. This is the lesson which it seems so hard to drive into the heads of an easy-going British public, and such schemes as Sir George Tryon's unfortunately tend to increase the difficulty of the task. If our corn-supply is interrupted, what possible good does the nation reap from paying for the lost ships out of the taxes? If it were seriously interrupted, it would hardly matter though the cost of the ships were ultimately recoverable from those who destroyed them. We should be vanquished all the same, and deposed from the position we now occupy. There is one national duty in this connection, and one only, that is worth insisting upon for a moment. That duty is to render it impossible for any enemy or combination of enemies to interrupt our supplies of food and whatever else is necessary for our well-being. Every proposal, however well meant, that

tends, in ever so small a degree, to obscure this duty, or to substitute for it illusory precautions against cureless evil, must be regarded with the greatest suspicion. If, in the time of trouble, this nation can adequately protect its commerce, and keep open highways for British shipping carrying on its multifarious duties, the empire will stand. If the nation fails to do this, the empire will fall."

Thus thundered the 'Times,' and the majority of the smaller fry took up the same cry. Many of Sir George Tryon's brother officers wrote against the scheme, amongst them Lord Charles Beresford. The leading idea of those who opposed the proposition seems to have been that the politicians and political economists of a certain school would grasp at something of this kind, or indeed at anything which seemed likely to afford a plausible excuse for not keeping the navy up to an efficient strength, and make use of it as an argument for keeping down the Naval Estimates. But it is certain that Tryon had no such idea in his mind when he put forth his proposition. He answered the 'Times'' leading article in a letter to that paper on the 19th September 1890, and pointed out that he had said nothing about the adequacy or inadequacy of the navy, but merely that on the outbreak of war (whatever condition our navy might be in) there would be an immense rise in the insurance of British ships, far beyond the actual risks run, and that this would drive them off the ocean if the State did not interfere in their favour by guaran-

teeing them against loss by the act of the enemy; and he also pointed out that very probably such State insurance need only be temporary until enough fast ships had been built to run the food cargoes, or until the question had adjusted itself to circumstances. In fact, his proposition was specially intended to arrest panic amongst shipowners on the outbreak of a war.

But shipowners and merchants did not appear to fall in with the idea, as indeed he foresaw.

Tryon was only anxious for the fullest discussion on the subject by all who had any interest in the matter, and invited any one to criticise his proposition freely, either privately or publicly. He received many answers, but few of them were favourable to his scheme.

It will not be necessary to quote more than one or two of the replies, as there is a strong family likeness amongst them all.

Sir Thomas Sutherland, the chairman of the P. & O. Company, says:—

"During the Russian war-scarce in 1885 we had much casual discussion on the problem of which your paper treats, and it was often suggested that, when once face to face with war, the only way to ensure our food-supply would be for the Government to pay for the loss of any vessels captured. But while the discussion was going on, the danger passed away.

"I confess I can hardly conceive that any Government will be prevailed upon to commit itself to a

policy of this kind in time of peace. On the other hand, every Government ought to discuss the matter in peace-time, so as to be prepared in emergency to act if necessary. This would be quite a different thing from formulating a scheme and bringing a bill before Parliament. In time of war-pressure the powers of the executive Government would be enormous, and the Queen could, by proclamation, offer almost any terms to secure supplies for the nation.

"As to the necessity of some such measure, no one can speak with any certainty. The insurance war-risk might be comparatively moderate or enormous: that would depend, of course, on the danger to be apprehended. It is certain that prices would adjust themselves to the cost of meeting the risk. It is clear that our facilities for securing supplies by sailing-vessels and slow steamers would be greatly diminished, and therefore a very heavy advance in the cost of the necessaries of life would be one of the results of war breaking out. Could, then, the Government lessen the blow which this would inflict on the nation by any preconceived arrangement under which shipowners would be indemnified for the loss of their vessels, and merchants for the loss of their goods on the high seas? I confess I doubt whether high prices and scarcity could be averted by any such arrangement. If the danger of putting to sea should not be extreme, merchants and shipowners would come to the front, and they would recoup themselves for their war-risk by the extra prices they would obtain. But if the danger of

capture were excessive, then the mere fact of the Government paying for the ships captured would not diminish famine prices to any sensible extent, though as a *dernier ressort* such a policy might be necessary to avert starvation."

Mr A. B. Forwood (now Sir Arthur Forwood), a Liverpool shipowner and merchant, and Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty under the last Conservative Government, wrote as follows with reference to Sir George Tryon's proposal:—

"As a shipowner and merchant I strongly advocate the State interfering as little as possible in mercantile transactions during the time of war, except affording the utmost protection by cruisers. State insurance, which must proceed on hard-and-fast rules, would work inequitably, and be a bar rather than an incentive to mercantile enterprise. It would place the man of least resource on a par with the trader who would exercise judgment and thought. Sir George Tryon in his paper gives regulations under which guarantee of safety would be accorded, showing that he recognises this element of differential risk, but it is impossible to even approximately classify the risks on general and broad lines. Every voyage and ship, its master and equipment, must be judged on its merits, and this can only be done by the experienced underwriter; and thus the best ship and the least risky voyage will pay the lowest premium.

"If there was a State guarantee, the cargo from the most distant and most risky route would be on

the same footing as the one imported from the nearer and safer port. If the shipowner and merchant are guaranteed, the motive for using precaution, which the underwriter could inculcate by means of his rate of premium, would be removed. Again, prices must advance of imported articles in time of war in the English market, with a corresponding fall abroad,—why should this gain be given to the merchant at the cost of the State? It would be a very one-sided bargain.

"I had experience in shipping to the Southern States during their war. The insurance charged was 20 per cent for some time. Business adjusted itself at once; ships were specially built, and particular masters obtained a repute which led to a great difference in rates of insurance. The merchant bought his cotton at from 2d. to 4d., and if he got through the blockade he realised 2s. If there had been a State guarantee, very probably more vessels would have run the risk for the very safe profit, and the difference in price might have been reduced; but the profit, whatever it was, would have gone to the individual at the cost of the State.

"The motive of Sir George Tryon is excellent—viz., to retain our trade and ships—but it would only have a partial effect, giving a bonus to a few ships, and leaving two-thirds or three-fourths of our tonnage out in the cold to seek other flags. These slower ships would be more seriously handicapped by such a scheme than by leaving all to their own resources. For example, if the State guaranteed

the 12-knot ship, you save the owner, say, 10 per cent on the value. The same guarantee is refused to the 10-knot ship, who, if he retains the British flag, must pay out of his pocket 15 per cent; thus you at once place the slow boat as a means of transit at a disadvantage of 15 per cent instead of only 5 per cent; and you do one of the two things—raise the best ship's freight excessively, besides presenting him with a practical money bonus of 10 per cent, or drive the slower coach to a foreign flag. I could carry my argument very much further, but the whole points to one conclusion, and one only. Freedom from State interference in trade during war is even of more importance than in time of peace."

It has been already said that Tryon courted the fullest criticism of his proposal, and amongst others he applied to an old friend and brother officer who had business connections in the City of London, Admiral A. J. Chatfield (retired); and the following memorandum was drawn up by the latter, after consultation (as he says) with some of the cleverest of the marine insurers in the City:—

"The proposal of Sir George Tryon seems to be economically unsound, inequitable, and impracticable. Economically unsound, because it is protection, in the form of a bounty upon ships and their cargoes. For the sake of argument let it be admitted that the nation would be willing to take the retrograde step suggested, it would certainly not saddle itself with the entire loss. If a fund had to be created (as proposed), by an *ad valorem* duty on

ships and their cargoes, it could not be levied equitably. It is granted that high-valued, full-powered steamers would run the least risk of being captured; yet they, with their valuable cargoes, would have to contribute a very large proportion to the fund, for the benefit of the low-powered second-class steamers, which would thus be unduly favoured. In fact, the advantage thus gained would probably act as a premium for the construction of this latter class of steamer.

"It is impracticable. Granted that the values of the steamers might be registered beforehand, some check on the values would be necessary, and an army of official surveyors would be required. It would not, however, be possible to register cargoes beforehand, and invoices would be a fallacious test, and could be freely salted. A second army of special experts would be required to check and agree values. Such work as this could not be coped with by any Government department successfully. Objections might be multiplied; and missing vessels in time of war would have to be paid for, unless the enemy would agree to keep an exact record of all the vessels destroyed."

And here is another opinion from the City:—

"The idea is a good one from a shipowner's point of view, and the difficulties in the way might possibly be got over. Such a plan would be almost a necessity for a shipowning company, as they could not afford to run the chances of war-risks and the war insurance. We do not, however, think it clear that

the adoption of this plan would effect all that is claimed for it. Numbers of vessels would be lost, and insurance money is not food. There are also many places where in time of war it would be impossible to run ships, so that trade would be much restrained.

"It would no doubt prevent numbers of ships from being laid up or changing their flags."

And here is yet another shipowner's opinion, that of Thomas H. Ismay, Esq., of the "White Star" Line :—

"I have carefully read the paper which you have been good enough to send me, and upon which you invite criticisms and suggestions from me. There really seems to be nothing left for me to suggest, so fully do your proposals cover the ground.

"It cannot be doubted that very widespread ignorance prevails in this country as to the protection that would be afforded by the neutral flag in the event of our becoming involved in war.

"If, as Captain Hall has well remarked, commerce can be efficiently protected by the neutral flag, we only require sufficient cruisers as vedettes to our squadrons. But I fear the neutral flag at best would secure only scant protection, and for this reason I am of opinion that your scheme is an extremely valuable one, tending, as it must, to inspire confidence among the class of shipowners whose steamers would form practically the only means of securing supplies and maintaining our commerce during time of war."

The reader who has taken sufficient interest in the subject to follow the discussion will no doubt have observed that many of the objections offered to Tryon's proposal deal with details, and do not grapple with the main point. Tryon's main point is, that the people will starve if they cannot get food; and also that large numbers of the working classes, who are dependent for work and wages on the importation of foreign raw material, will starve if they cannot get work and wages; and his proposition appears to be intended as a measure to tide over the period of the first great pressure, or dislocation of the ordinary course of trade, which might be expected to take place on the sudden outbreak of war with a maritime Power. He says distinctly that he believes matters will adjust themselves after a time, in accordance with the economic conditions of the case; and he simply wishes to make such arrangements as will prevent a panic during the first few months of a war. He evidently does not think that it matters much whether a State guarantee would prove to be strictly equitable as between the merchants, or partially inequitable; nor whether some shipowners and merchants made fortunes, and others made nothing, or lost what they had got. He wished to institute such a scheme of State guarantee as would avert a national collapse through famine, and the conclusion of an ignominious peace through internal dissensions caused by such a rise in the price of food as to produce universal distress in these islands, and thus paralyse the arm of

the executive Government of the day. He wished to see the principle admitted that it is the duty of the State to interfere in such a case, and—under the absolutely unique conditions of Great Britain—save the country from the horrors of starvation, until the commercial question had time to settle itself, and our navy had either gained a practical command of the sea or lost it.

It may of course be said that the whole subject is one of details, and nothing but details. Possibly it may be so. It is at any rate a very interesting question. The leading arguments on both sides have been put before the reader, and he can form his own conclusions thereon. The present writer offers no opinion on the merits of the case. It is a case in which one may perhaps be forgiven for riding on a rail, in readiness to drop off on whichever side seems most like to be the right one when the time comes,—an operation usually known as reserving judgment, or keeping an open mind on the subject.

Perhaps time may show whether Sir George Tryon was right or wrong.

Malta Harbour.

CHAPTER XV.

MEDITERRANEAN COMMAND.

In August 1891 Sir George Tryon was appointed to succeed Admiral Sir Anthony Hoskins in command of her Majesty's ships and vessels on the Mediterranean station. He left England in the Nile battleship on the 11th of September, and arrived at Gibraltar on the 15th, where he met Sir Anthony in the Victoria, with the first division of the Mediterranean fleet, and Sir George assumed command on the 21st, Sir Anthony going to Genoa (for England) in the Surprise.

The first division, under the new Commander-in-Chief, visited Port Mahon, Madelena, Naples, Malta (a flying visit), Nauplia, and Milo; and at the last place, on the 22d of October, the second division of the squadron under the rear-admiral, Lord Walter Kerr, joined the first division, and the two divisions cruised together and exercised at steam tactics until November, when Sir George with his division sailed for Malta, where they wintered, the second division remaining in the Levant.

The post of Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean is the most important sea-going command which a British admiral can hold. Occasionally one of the other commands—such as North America from 1861 to 1864, or China during one of the wars—assumes a temporary importance and interest which diverts attention from the Mediterranean, but it is only temporary: and it has long been recognised by the highest political and naval authorities that the British Mediterranean fleet ought to be the most powerful sea-going fleet in the world. Our interests there are so great that we cannot afford to be driven out of it, even for a time, as we were towards the close of the last century. Most of the greatest naval battles of the world have been fought in the Mediterranean, and the fate of nations decided thereby. Even before the Suez Canel was cut, and our Eastern trade had assumed the immense importance which it has lately done, our forefathers recognised that a nation which aspired to be a leader in trade and commerce must hold the

ENTRANCE TO MALTA HARBOUR.

Mediterranean in force, and be ready to defend her interests in that sea whenever it came to fighting.

Once or twice during the present century our naval forces in the Mediterranean have been allowed to fall below their proper strength, as compared with those of other Powers; and whenever this has been the case, our position as one of the Great Powers of Europe has been in jeopardy. It only happens when the disciples of false economy and the "Little Englanders," as they are called, get the upper hand in the councils of the nation; or some wild hallucinations regarding the millennium of universal peace take temporary possession of the minds of the majority in Great Britain, thus threatening the existence of the empire.

Happily these aberrations have not been frequent; and thus it is the case that the British Mediterranean fleet has usually been the most powerful sea-going squadron in commission belonging to any nation in any part of the world. The Mediterranean, moreover, is our great nautical drill-ground. Even in the old sailing days it was so regarded; and our crack sailing-frigates and our smartest line-of-battle ships drilled and exercised against each other, and tried rate of sailing in its waters, just as our heavily armoured monsters manœuvre at steam tactics, and carry out other fleet exercises to-day.

The opportunities for drills and exercises are better in the Mediterranean than they are in the

Channel squadron, which is the only other squadron of British battleships in commission. The weather is on the whole finer and drier. The crews of the ships do not get so much on shore, nor are there so many changes as there are in the Channel squadron; thus commanding officers have a better chance of getting their ships "in good order," as the expression goes. And without the smallest reproach to the ships in home waters, it is generally admitted that the Mediterranean squadron is our smartest and best drilled—in fact, our typical squadron of exercise. Nowhere else, except for a week or two during the autumnal manœuvres, is it possible to get ten or a dozen battleships together in one fleet for tactical exercises; and it is only in the Mediterranean, when the first and second divisions combine for exercise, that fleet tactics on a large and comprehensive scale can be satisfactorily carried out, and the evolutions of the signal-book properly and fully developed.

There is, and always has been, a friendly rivalry between the Channel and Mediterranean squadrons, so far as the term rivalry can be applied to two squadrons of exercise which seldom meet. The Channel people by no means admit any superiority in the smartness, cleanliness, or "finish" of the Mediterranean ships or their crews, but rather affect to look down upon them as "fair-weather sailors"; and this term, especially in the days of masts and sails, was regarded as a severe and withering reproach. But, on the other hand, the

Mediterranean people have a crushing retort in the words "not quite up to Mediterranean form," which is usually applied to some newly commissioned ship, or perhaps some ship recently joined from the Channel squadron, which has not yet acquired a certain arbitrary standard of polish and finish supposed to represent "Mediterranean form." But this kind of rivalry, this assumption of superiority, —"swagger," as it has been sometimes irreverently called,—is a moral force of the highest value, and works almost entirely for good. The crew of a ship, or the crews of a squadron, which has acquired a name for special smartness, or for extra cleanliness and finish, are invariably better behaved, and generally more ready for any emergency, than men who have been allowed to fall below par in these respects. Thus wise commanding officers cultivate this sentiment, and turn it to very practical use.

The maintenance of a powerful British Mediterranean squadron is said to be a cause of jealousy and apprehension to some of our neighbours; but so is almost everything else we do outside our own borders, so that it becomes impossible to guide our policy in accordance with an over-sensitive regard for what may cause jealousy or disapproval among our nautical rivals.

"Do you bite your thumb at me, sir? I bite my thumb, sir."

We do not bite our thumbs at anybody in particular by keeping a powerful fleet in the Mediterranean, where our commercial and political interests

are so great; and if others choose to regard it as a menace, that is not our fault. We cannot abandon our traditional naval policy without resigning our position as one of the Great Powers, and earning the contempt instead of the jealousy of all our neighbours. It is our commercial success, and our immense mercantile fleet, which are the real causes of jealousy and envy; and Great Britain is scarcely prepared to abandon these without a struggle.

The selection for the appointment of naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean must always be an anxious responsibility for the Minister to whom it is intrusted. It is not too much to say that (even in spite of the telegraph) the peace of Europe not infrequently depends upon the tact, discretion, and sound judgment of the admiral in command of the British Mediterranean fleet; and thus our naval records show that one of our ablest and most distinguished admirals of the day is always to be found with his flag flying in those waters.

Not many years ago we kept only one sea-going admiral in the Mediterranean, and an admiral in the dockyard at Malta, who occasionally hoisted his flag and went to sea; but latterly the squadron has been so much increased that it has been considered necessary to keep two sea-going admirals there in addition to the dockyard admiral.

When Sir George Tryon relieved Sir Anthony Hoskins in command of the station the rear-admiral

was Lord Walter Kerr, and the admiral in charge of Malta dockyard Admiral Buller. These were relieved not long afterwards, respectively, by Admiral Markham and Admiral Tracey.

Notwithstanding that Malta is by far our largest and most important dockyard out of England, it has been found to be unequal to our present requirements, and as it is not possible to effect any considerable extension of it, our responsible statesmen have wisely decided to build docks at Gibraltar, which does not look as if there was any serious intention of reversing our traditional naval policy of keeping a powerful fleet in the Mediterranean—though, strange to say, we have quite lately seen grave propositions made for the complete abandonment of that sea by the British fleet. Egypt to be handed over to the French, Malta to the Pope, and Cyprus returned to the Turks. And, stranger still, these propositions have been made not by foreigners but by Englishmen, and one an English soldier!

Tryon was certainly not an advocate of this policy, or "strategy," as it has been humorously called. The so-called policy of "scuttle" did not commend itself to his judgment. He saw no reason for backing down on every possible occasion, for fear of hurting somebody's over-sensitive feelings. His views on this subject have been quoted in an earlier chapter,[1] and need not be repeated; but he certainly held strong opinions as to the importance of

[1] Chapter xi.

Great Britain keeping a firm grip on the Mediterranean, and being ready to hold her own against any probable combination of enemies; and during the period that he held command of the station he devoted all his time, his abundant energy, his great powers of organisation, and his personal influence as a leader, towards making the most of the material at his disposal, and moulding his squadron into a fighting machine which should be second to none.

He was always most anxious to keep himself thoroughly well informed upon all subjects of interest, which could be of any use to him, from every part of his extensive command; and with this object in view he addressed the following letter to all captains and officers in command of ships, shortly after he arrived on the station:—

"DEAR CAPTAIN ——,—Officers in command of H.M. ships, and especially those on detached service, not infrequently become acquainted with matters of interest of a nature which do not usually form the subject of official correspondence.

"I shall be very glad to receive informal letters from you at any time you desire to draw my attention to any points of interest, as I am very anxious to keep thoroughly acquainted with everything that may affect the conduct of affairs on the station."

This letter made all commanding officers—even

the commander of the smallest gun-vessel—feel that they were in the confidence of the Commander-in-Chief; and that they were encouraged to seek useful information by every legitimate means, and impart it to the Admiral for the good of the public service: and there can be no doubt that they felt their own importance considerably increased by this invitation to communicate informally and confidentially with the Commander-in-Chief. This exhibition of friendly confidence—without a shadow of undue familiarity—which he was in the habit of showing to those serving under his orders was one of the secrets of Sir George Tryon's power and authority, and was one of the main causes of that remarkable devotion with which he was served.

Unfortunately some of our naval worthies have attained distinction by a different line of conduct; and have thought to add to their dignity and importance by assuming the position of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, to whom all men were called upon to bow down and worship, either with or without music. But this was not the view that Tryon took of his position as a naval commander. He rather sought to associate himself with his officers, and to make them feel that they all belonged to the same company, the members of which were to seek their highest honour, and to endeavour to attain the summit of their loftiest ambition, by devoting themselves heart and soul to the best interests of the service; and he set them the example of doing

so. He assumed the position of managing director of the company for the time being, and was ready at all times to consult, to advise, and to lead. No detail was too small for his notice; nor was anything too much trouble for him, so long as it was likely to increase in the smallest degree the efficiency of any branch of the public service, or to further the legitimate ambition or individual interests of anybody serving under his orders.

He was in the truest sense of the word a leader, and, as became a leader, eminently just and impartial.

His views on this subject were curtly expressed in a speech which he delivered on board the mercantile training-ship Conway at Liverpool, where he went to give away the prizes, just before he left England to take command of the Mediterranean station. He said (towards the close of a humorous and interesting speech): "Do right and fear not. As officers, while just, and while firm, be considerate to those under you, and seek to lead rather than to command."

This was the key-note of his own conduct; and his tact, his judgment, his mother wit, and the transparent honesty and public spirit of his motives, enabled him to assume quite naturally the position of a leader, without in the smallest degree compromising his position as a commander. On the contrary, his kind consideration for those serving under his orders enhanced the respect in which he was universally held; the result being that he was

served with a devotion and implicit obedience rare even amongst sailors.

The disaster to the Howe[1] occurred during the time that Sir George Tryon was in command of the Mediterranean station; and although she did not belong to his squadron, he took it very much to heart as a national calamity, and his private and semi-official letters show how deep an interest he took in the matter, and how anxious he was that she should be saved at all costs for the honour of the country.

It was in consequence of this accident to the Howe that he issued the following Memorandum to his own squadron—a Memorandum which has acquired a peculiar significance and interest in the light of subsequent events:—

"MEMORANDUM.

"'It may frequently happen that an order may be given to an officer, which, from circumstances not known to the person who gave it at the time he issued it, would be impossible to execute, or the difficulty or risk of the execution of it would be so great as to amount to a moral impossibility.—Duke of Wellington's G.O., 11th November 1803.'

"1. While an order should be implicitly obeyed,

[1] The Howe, a first-class battleship belonging to the Channel squadron, grounded on the rocks going into Ferrol harbour; several compartments were filled, and she remained on the rocks for nearly five months, but was finally floated off, taken home, and repaired.

still circumstances may change, and conditions may widely vary from those known, or even from those that presented themselves at the time orders were issued. In such cases the officer receiving orders, guided by the object that he knows his chief has in view, must act on his own responsibility.

"2 (*a*). Orders directing the movement of ships, either collectively or singly, are invariably accompanied, as a matter of course, with the paramount understood condition—'With due regard to the safety of H.M. ships.'

"(*b*) When the literal obedience to any order, however given, would entail a collision with a friend, or endanger a ship by running on shore, or in any other way, paramount orders direct that the danger is to be avoided, while the object of the order should be attained if possible.

"3. An admiral leading a fleet relies with confidence that while the order of the fleet is maintained, each ship will be handled and piloted with all the care and attention that is exercised in the guidance of the leading ship. He relies that this will be the case, more especially when a fleet is approaching land or a harbour. When a tide or a current is experienced, it is clear that a following ship cannot be safely conducted by eye-steering after a leader; rear ships are liable to be swept by currents to one side or the other off the safe track, and the farther they are off a leader of a column, the farther they are likely to be from the true track.

"4. Risks that are not only justifiable, but are demanded during war, are not justifiable during peace.

"*Manœuvring.*

"5. Ships following a leader in column should, when manœuvring, avoid turning on a greater arc than that of the leader; if there is any error or difference it should be due to turning on a smaller arc.

"6. As a rule, when a ship has turned wide on a leader, following ships should turn on the guide of their column, and not on the ship that has got out of station and has to recover it.

"7. When in line ahead any error from the exact station of a ship should be in the direction of being ahead of station; but when in line abreast any error should be in the direction of being astern of station rather than ahead of it.

"8. The neighbourly duties of ships in a fleet to each other are duties which must be kept constantly in mind.

"G. TRYON,
Vice-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief."

It was while he was in command of the Mediterranean squadron that Sir George Tryon instituted, and frequently practised, his system of manœuvres without signals, commonly known as the "T A" system. The subject is of a somewhat technical nature, and it is proposed to deal with it separately in the next chapter.

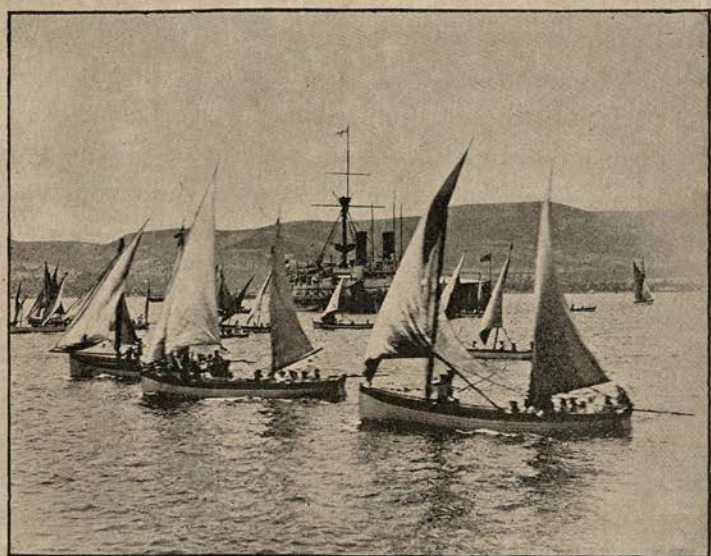
Just before the two divisions of the fleet separated for the winter of 1891-92 the annual regatta took place.

These annual fleet regattas in the Mediterranean are looked forward to by both officers and men with the keenest interest; and the preparations for the two great events—viz., the rowing race for the Duke of Edinburgh's Challenge Cup, and the sailing race for the Commander-in-Chief's Cup—are carried on for months before the time. The regatta usually takes place late in the autumn, either in October or early in November, just before the separation of the two divisions; and the Admiral always endeavours to bring as many ships together as possible.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Challenge Cup was presented by his Royal Highness when he was Commander-in-Chief of the station, for the best 12-oared service cutter, to be rowed over a straight course of three miles; and the boat winning it is the champion cutter for the year. It is a proud moment for a ship's company when this coveted trophy comes on board and takes its place in a glass case under the charge of the sentry at the captain's cabin door—the name of the ship winning it, with the date, being duly inscribed upon it. Everybody in the ship feels as if he had had something to do with winning it. This is essentially the men's trophy; but the Admiral's Cup for the sailing race is the officers' trophy, and becomes the absolute property of the officer winning it. The cup race for 1891 took place at Suda Bay,

in the island of Candia. Sir George Tryon presented a very handsome silver cup; and after a splendid race, in which more than sixty boats took part, it was won by Lieutenant Evan Thomas of H.M.S. Victoria, in one of that ship's cutters.

The annual presentation of a cup by the admiral in command of a squadron, to be sailed for with any



Start of Cutters and Gigs.

rig, and in any class of *bonâ fide* service boats, was instituted by the late Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby for the encouragement of boat-sailing in 1872, when he commanded the Channel squadron; and his generous example has been so largely followed by other admirals on most of our principal stations, that "the race for the Admiral's Cup" has come

we are, especially as regards the flag, the symbol of unity and of the nation."

After a certain amount of correspondence had taken place between the Admiral and the representatives of the several colonies, and also a considerable amount of intercolonial correspondence, on the subject of a system of mutual defence in the shape of a squadron of fast cruisers for the special protection of Australian coasts and commerce, a definite proposal was made by Admiral Tryon as to the number, nature, and cost of the ships which he considered most suitable for the purpose.

The original proposal was for six Archers, and eight sea-going torpedo-boats of about 150 tons,—the Archer being a vessel of 1770 tons, carrying six 6-inch breechloading guns, and having a speed of about 16 knots: the cost of each Archer (complete) being about £105,000, and of each torpedo-boat about £53,000. The torpedo-boats to have a speed of about 19 knots.

But whilst the negotiations were in progress, a considerable and somewhat sudden advance took place in Europe with regard to the general ideas as to the speed of "fast cruisers." "Speed" is of course always a comparative term, and the "fast" vessel of to-day is a "slow" vessel ten years hence. In 1885 16 knots was considered a fast cruiser, though not the fastest, as our own Iris and Mercury were afloat prior to this date, with a speed of 18 knots; but yet there was an idea that speed might be too dearly bought, and that it might be

better—in the case of a man-of war—to sacrifice a knot or two of speed for the sake of a much more powerful armament, some protection for engines and boilers, and a larger supply of coal.[1] But the action of our French neighbours in laying down cruisers of a speed of 19 knots forced us to adopt a similar policy; and thus it very soon came to be accepted that nothing under 19 knots could be regarded as a satisfactory speed for a cruiser. It was fortunate that this somewhat sudden jump took place before the Australian cruisers were ordered, as it enabled a greatly superior class of vessel to be supplied, instead of those originally contemplated—though of course at an increased cost, for speed is expensive.

The cruisers actually built for, and appropriated to, the Australian service, instead of being Archers of 1770 tons and 16 knots speed, were vessels of 2575 tons and 19 knots speed. Five of these, designed by Sir William White, were built and equipped in England, manned by Imperial officers and men, and sent to Australia, to be under the command of the Admiral on that station, for the special protection of Australian trade, and to be paid for by the Colonial Governments. It is not necessary to enter into the details of the agreement, which was finally arrived at after much discussion between the different Governments and the Admi-

[1] It is assumed that our readers are aware that all men-of-war represent a compromise, on a given tonnage, between the attributes of speed, armament, protection, and coal-supply—the last representing what is called "radius of action."

ralty, the latter being represented in Australia by Tryon, whose untiring energy, and admirable tact and courtesy towards all concerned, are generally admitted to have been the principal factors of a successful issue. It is sufficient to say that the squadron now exists. Four of the ships are kept permanently in commission, and one in reserve; and it can scarcely be doubted that this small beginning represents the embyro of that which is destined to expand in years to come into a great and powerful navy, whether Australia eventually becomes an independent Power or remains a part of the British empire; for her ocean trade is already considerable, and is sure to increase with wealth and population.

Tryon never saw the squadron that he had done so much to procure for Australia. This of course was only natural, as ships are not built and equipped in a day; and they did not arrive on the station until long after he had left it.

Before the intercolonial negotiations concerning the new squadron were completed, while they were still in progress, and Tryon was devoting all his energy towards bringing them to a successful conclusion, an event occurred which seems to have caused him much annoyance and disappointment. This was the assembly of the Colonial Conference in London to consider the very question which he had been authorised to settle. It was composed of the Agent-General, with the addition of one delegate from each of the colonies concerned. Tryon felt

this deeply, as it was practically cutting the ground from under his feet, and to a large extent ignoring the hard work which he had already done. He was far too loyal and patriotic to make any public complaint on the subject; and until the day of his death it was not known to any save his closest and most intimate friends that it was largely in consequence of this that he asked to be relieved from his command at the expiration of two years, instead of holding it for three years, which is the normal term of such a command.

Admiral Tryon was not accompanied to Australia by his wife. During the early part of his command threatening war-clouds were in the air; and besides this, there was no house ready for him to occupy. The New South Wales Government, which had previously paid the rent of a house for the commodore in the town of Sydney, had recently given a house in a beautiful site on the north shore of the harbour, opposite to the town, and overlooking the man-of-war anchorage, which is almost at the foot of the garden, but the house required alterations, and it was some months before it was ready for occupation. But as soon as Tryon did get into it, he entertained Sydney society with a hospitality which was remembered for many years after. He is spoken of as a most attentive and genial host; particularly kind and thoughtful in planning parties and entertainments for the amusement of the younger members of society, though not neglectful of the orthodox and stately dinner-party for the

elders. Some of his entertainments were on a grand scale, and were thoroughly appreciated by a community which is famous throughout the empire for its own lavish hospitality, and particularly for the warm and hearty welcome always given to English sailors.

Amongst other local matters, Tryon took a great interest in the Naval Home at Sydney. This institution had been founded as a memorial to the late Commodore Goodenough, a distinguished and accomplished officer, who had lost his life while in command of the Australian station, through the effects of a poisoned arrow fired at him by the natives of Santa Cruz island, to whom he had gone on a mission of peace and conciliation. But the demand for accommodation in the Goodenough Home had entirely outgrown the building, and a larger one was required. The New South Wales Government, with their usual generosity, gave a site; and Tryon, with his characteristic energy, set to work to raise subscriptions, and to arrange about the plans and details of the present "Royal Naval House" at Sydney, which was formally opened some years afterwards by Lord Carrington, the Governor of New South Wales, at the request of Admiral Lord Charles Scott, who was then in command of the Australian station.

Tryon was greatly assisted in raising the necessary funds by a fortuitous circumstance—a sort of windfall. It appears that when New South Wales set the patriotic example of sending a strong con-

tingent of volunteer troops to Egypt, to fight beside the Queen's soldiers in that belated and unsuccessful Soudan expedition for the relief of the heroic Gordon at Khartoum, large sums of money were raised by private subscription throughout the colony for the purpose of providing for the prospective widows and orphans, or others dependent on the gallant volunteers; but as the latter happened not to see any hard fighting, nor to suffer any serious losses from climate or otherwise, the sums subscribed were greatly in excess of the requirements for which the money was raised, and with the consent of the donors much of this was transferred to the building fund of the "Royal Naval House" at Sydney—an institution which is described by an admiral lately in command of the Australian station as a fine stone building capable of accommodating nearly 300 men, and the best naval home in the empire.

Another matter which Tryon pushed forward with great energy was the completion of the naval depot in Sydney harbour. His predecessor—Commodore Erskine—thought it of more consequence to have a depot and repairing-shops, where the ships already on the station could be repaired, than to increase the squadron without having a proper repairing-yard; and he obtained from the New South Wales Government a suitable site for the purpose on Garden Island, and started the work, which Tryon continued but did not complete. It has been said that when the works are completed the resources of

the yard will be second only to Malta of the British dockyards abroad—though this was said before the new plans for strengthening Gibraltar, in this respect, were taken in hand. Hong-Kong also will be a formidable rival.

In the selection of sites for new batteries, and submarine mine-fields for the defence of the various Australian and New Zealand harbours, Tryon was largely consulted in conjunction with the military authorities. Such questions are quite as much naval as military. Indeed a trained seaman, a commander of ships and squadrons, who has kept himself thoroughly abreast of all modern improvements, is the only person capable of indicating the nature and strength of any probable naval attack on a fortified or partially fortified port, and of thus pointing out to land artillerists and engineers the position and extent of the necessary defences to make the port reasonably secure.

It has been before remarked that Tryon was entirely in favour of all such local defences being altogether in the hands of local corps, so as to get the inhabitants of each district to identify themselves with their own defence—that is to say, the defence of their own homes. He was most emphatic upon this point; and although he recognises that it will be necessary to have a few highly trained experts from the mother country as instructors for the local corps, he repudiates the idea of anything in the nature of a subsidised force for manning the forts and batteries, or working the submarine mine defences.

This may at first sight appear to be inconsistent on his part, as the auxiliary squadron which he was working so hard to establish was neither more nor less than a subsidised force, and was on that account strongly objected to by some high authorities, as it instituted taxation without representation, the colonies being asked to pay for the ships and their maintenance, and yet to have no voice in their management.

But Tryon was above all things practical, and he knew perfectly well that in the present state of development of the Australian colonies—and probably for some years to come—it would not be possible to have a thoroughly efficient sea-going squadron of modern ships manned otherwise than with Imperial officers and men who had undergone years of systematic scientific training, and who, moreover, could be periodically changed, so as to keep them abreast of all the *coming* improvements.

He, however, had no doubt as to the desirability of allowing the Australians to furnish the *personnel* for their own defence wherever it was practicable—that is to say, for all their shore and purely harbour defences.

Writing on the subject to the Premier of Queensland in October 1886, he says: "It is not a mere subsidised force that will do what is wanted. It is not only money that is required to produce effective forces, but it is the personal service of our countrymen all over the world. It is blood rather than gold that is the basis of every true force; and to

awaken the true spirit, the Government of each colony, the people of each colony, should manage, as far as possible, their local forces during time of peace. Unless they do so the burden of cost will be irksome, and the interest of the people in their maintenance—which is a first factor for success—will not be evoked."

Here we see the practical mind which scorns to be pedantically consistent simply for the sake of appearances, but would rather apply boldly the proper means to attain the end desired—the defence of the empire.

During the earlier period of his command in Australian waters Tryon was very much tied to Sydney in consequence of the probability of war. Sydney was the most central position he could take up to await events; and he was also forced to keep his squadron concentrated and within easy reach of his call, instead of dispersing them to look after British interests in the various districts of his widely extended command. But he was able to pay visits to Victoria and to Queensland; and in the summer (our winter) of 1885-86, and again in that of 1886-87, he was able to visit New Zealand and Tasmania. He gave valuable advice to the Government of New Zealand with regard to the nature and extent of the local defences necessary for the protection of that colony; and on the occasion of his first visit a meeting was held at Government House, Wellington, in January 1886, to discuss the question of the naval defences of the colony. There were present

the Governor, Sir Wm. Drummond Jervois, the Admiral, and the responsible Ministers of the New Zealand Parliament, of whom Sir Robert Stout was Premier.

One of Admiral Tryon's most difficult tasks was to get the New Zealand Ministers to agree to take common action with the other Australasian colonies. They insisted on regarding their case as peculiar, and as requiring special treatment: and no doubt to a certain extent they were right, as their distance from Australia gave them a feeling of isolation; and they probably entertained the idea that if war with any maritime Power were to break out, the Admiral in command of the station would be apt to concentrate his attention, and the limited force at his command, upon the defence of the richer and more populous colonies on the Australian coast, and that their inadequately defended country would in consequence specially invite attack. They seem to have failed to grasp the strategic truism, that a concentration of the British naval forces in Australasian waters would afford to them a better protection than a dispersion of the same force for the special protection of each colony. Before consenting to pay their share towards the maintenance of an additional squadron for the protection of the Australasian colonies, they desired to obtain some promise that a section of that squadron should be permanently stationed in New Zealand. They say: "Ministers at once admit that, from an Im-

perial point of view, the defences of New Zealand and Australia may be considered as bound up together. They are of opinion, however, that New Zealand is so exceptionally situated, being so distant from Australia, that no system of naval defence would be complete which did not make New Zealand the headquarters of a section of the Australasian fleet. This was pointed out in the previous memorandum of Ministers, and they do not require to urge it further."

Not only New Zealand, but all the colonies, had special views (as indeed was only natural in self-governing colonies) as to the constitution, strength, and financial arrangements for the auxiliary squadron; though as a rule they were content to leave the details, as to the size and speed of the ships, to the judgment of the Admiral and the Admiralty. There was, however, one exception to this, in the case of New Zealand, where the Premier in his memorandum points out, with much sagacity and foresight, that the proposed speed of the ships is insufficient. He modestly remarks: "Ministers venture to point out that it has been authoritatively stated that cruisers being able to steam at full speed only up to 16½ knots would be of little service in attacking some of the vessels that are now constructed and afloat. This, however, is a matter on which the Admiralty are better able to express an opinion than Ministers."

Ministers, however, were right in this case, and 19-knot vessels were eventually supplied.

During his visit to New Zealand Tryon managed to find time to visit that marvellous volcanic district of the hot lakes and the pink-and-white terraces,—those wonders of the world, the surpassing charm and beauty of which have been enthusiastically described by many of those who have had the good fortune to visit them: a good fortune denied to all future generations, as, not long after Tryon's visit to them, they were totally destroyed by an earthquake and volcanic eruption on a gigantic scale, which obliterated every trace of the natural beauty of this district, leaving behind nothing more attractive than heaps of blackened cinders and a strong smell of sulphur.

After his second visit to New Zealand in February and March 1887, Tryon returned to Sydney, and in April he hauled down his flag, and handed over the command of the station to Rear-Admiral Henry Fairfax. He then went overland to Melbourne, and embarked on board the P. & O. steamer Ballarat for England.

Tryon left his mark on Australia: he not only left behind him the pleasantest recollections of his genial cheery manners, his courteous social hospitality, and his great tact and judgment in dealing with delicate Imperio-Colonial questions, which in less skilful hands might easily have given rise to soreness and jealousy; but he also left solid work behind him, in the shape of vastly improved and better organised means of defence, both by land and sea. He also en-

couraged—while carefully avoiding any semblance of dictating—a spirit of unity amongst the various colonies, pointing out the many common interests, especially the interests of mutual defence, which he as an impartial looker-on was better able to discern than the popularly elected Ministers, who held office by virtue of their opinions or administrative abilities concerning narrower and more essentially local matters.

The seed which Tryon worked so hard to sow may perhaps some day bear fruit in Australian, if not in Australasian, federation; but he would be a bold man who ventured to prophesy on such a thorny subject. It must be left entirely to the Australians themselves, without interference from the mother country. They are of age, let them speak for themselves. War would doubtless bring about federation immediately; but war is a rough remedy, and might bring other things besides.

The amount of correspondence, official and semi-official, which passed between Admiral Tryon and the Governors and Prime Ministers of the various colonies during the two years that the former was in naval command of the station was something appalling.

It has never been asserted that Tryon was perfect. Indeed it would be mere mockery to say that any man was without his faults; and one of Tryon's certainly was that he wrote too much. One of his best and dearest friends says of him, "He wrote too much, and too often, and his

writing was very difficult to make out." This is quite true, and his biographer knows it to his cost. In reading his despatches, and the large correspondence above alluded to, it is impossible to avoid regretting that he did not put his views into fewer words. There are sound common-sense, and very often lofty sentiments, in almost everything he wrote; but it is unfortunately much too diffuse, and if it had been put into half the space it would have been far more effective. This defect was very remarkable in an eminently practical man, and a man of prompt and vigorous action, which he certainly was; but when he got a pen in his hand he could not help spinning a long yarn. He thought fast, and he wrote fast, and latterly very illegibly, so that even his confidential secretaries and clerks often made mistakes in copying his writing. But in spite of being somewhat "long-winded" he did good solid work in Australia, and had the satisfaction of knowing that it was appreciated by his immediate superiors at the Admiralty, as the following letter will testify:—

"ADMIRALTY, 10*th January* 1887.

"SIR,—My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have had under their consideration your despatches, reporting the result of the meeting of the Premiers of the several colonies on board H.M.S. Nelson on the 26th and 27th of April 1886 to consider the question of the local defence

and protection of floating trade in the waters of the Australasian colonies.

"(2) You were charged with the duty of taking the initiative in bringing before the Premiers and Governors of the several colonies this important question, at the request of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and their Lordships regret that as the period of your command will so soon draw to a close, it will be impossible for you to bring to a satisfactory conclusion a question in the consideration of which you have taken such a deep interest.

"(3) The Secretary of State for the Colonies has expressed his approval of the course pursued by you throughout these negotiations, and I have their Lordships' commands to signify to you their fullest approbation of your energetic and judicious conduct, and their approbation of the marked ability you have displayed in the consideration of this important scheme.

"(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR"
(*Secretary to the Admiralty*).

And again, on giving up the command of the station :—

"ADMIRALTY, 8*th June* 1887.

"SIR,—In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 17th of April last, reporting that you had on that day transferred the command of the Australian station to Rear-Admiral Fairfax, I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to convey to you their approval of the

efficient manner in which the important duties devolving upon you as Commander-in-Chief on the Australian station have been carried out.

"(2) My Lords have already expressed the appreciation they entertain of the energetic and judicious measures adopted by you in furtherance of the scheme for the defence and protection of our floating trade in the waters of the Australasian colonies; and their Lordships believe that if that scheme becomes operative it will be largely due to the skill and success with which you dealt with the local objections of the different colonies to a federated defence of common interests.

"(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR"

(Secretary to the Admiralty).

CHAPTER XII.

HOME AGAIN.

SHORTLY after his return to England Admiral Tryon was made a K.C.B., in recognition of his services in Australia. He had already received the C.B. for his Abyssinian services. The K.C.M.G. was really the order which he would have liked best, as it is essentially a colonial order, and he liked to be identified with the Colonies, and was proud of his work in Australia. But the K.C.B. was also a high honour and a recognition of his services, which, it is needless to say, he accepted with pride and gratification.

In July 1887 Admiral Sir George Tryon contested unsuccessfully the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire. Writing to his old friend, Sir Samuel Griffith, in Australia, he thus describes his defeat :—

"Immediately on my arrival in England I received an invitation to stand for a division of Lincolnshire with which I was connected. I rushed hastily into the fray, fought hard, and was badly beaten. The

labourers, for the first time, voted *en bloc* for my opponent; nearly all farmers and others for me. This was largely due to what is called agricultural depression. The district is, agriculturally, perhaps the richest part of all England, and more beautiful and plenteous crops you never saw than there are this year; but prices are so much lower than they were, while there is no corresponding reduction in the cost of production, that times are very bad to what they used to be a few years back. Thus the farmers employ fewer labourers, and the wages have decreased by a good two shillings a-week—a good seventh. Many have left their villages, seeking employ elsewhere, and many have emigrated, and these of the very best. Their relatives who remain do not study causes, but lament the loss—as they call it—of their relatives, whom they consider to be driven away because the farmers won't provide them employ; and, believing in promises made without a prospect of any being fulfilled, voted for a man who had been talking among them for two years, backed by an Irish brigade, who, with the pathos of Irving in a tragedy, told them Irish stories.

"From the North of Ireland I on my side had a small brigade, but they came late in the field. They came voluntarily, and told their stories and their views with fully equal ability and pathos; but they were outnumbered.

"Out of one train at Spalding five Irish Parnellites stepped, to meet three Unionist Irish representatives.

"Personally I regretted defeat because of party reasons. I came home full of what I thought were world-wide notions and principles, and I thought I should be proud to take a part in the House, especially in colonial matters, and to do my best to solidify the present great interest that is taken by the people in matters that affect them. I was glad to find that the conference at the Colonial Office had at all events brought about a consensus of opinion on naval matters, on which we were so much in agreement."

Tryon's defeat was no doubt a great disappointment to him. He was greatly handicapped by having such a short time to prepare for the fight. "Rushed hastily into the fray" is a very fair description of the matter. He only arrived in England from Australia on the 5th of June, went down to Spalding on the 14th, and the polling took place on the 1st of July. He was further handicapped by being lame. He hurt one of his legs on board the steamer coming home, and it was still very painful, so that he had to hobble about using a stick, a state of affairs which considerably curtailed his wonted activity.

The following was his address to the electors :—

"Gentlemen,—By the death of the late Earl of Winchilsea you are deprived of the services of your zealous and able member; and I have the honour to address you as a candidate for the vacant seat.

I do so in reply to the flattering invitation which I have just received.

"Twelve months since your votes were asked on the question whether Great Britain and Ireland were to remain one United Kingdom, or whether Ireland was to be made half independent, with the inevitable consequence of early and complete separation. Your choice was not doubtful; in common with the great majority of your countrymen, you resolved that the Union should be maintained at all risks.

"But this plain expression of the national will at the general election was met by the disruptionists with open defiance. The authority of the law was to be set at nought in Ireland by the 'Plan of Campaign' and other similar combinations, while all legislation (including many measures primarily affecting the interests of the agricultural and working classes) was to be prevented by obstruction in Parliament, until Englishmen in sheer disgust should give up the struggle.

"Gentlemen, what course was a British Government to adopt? Were they to submit tamely to these tactics, and betray the first principles of the Constitution, by the confession that the lawfully expressed will of the majority might be overborne by any minority turbulent and unscrupulous enough to make the attempt? Or were they to face their opponents boldly, trusting that the nation would give them all requisite support in carrying out its own distinct mandate?

"The Government have chosen the latter course. Finding Loyalists in Ireland boycotted, outraged, and exposed to absolute ruin, and the ordinary law foiled by seditious combinations, they have introduced a bill, of which it has been truly said that its very shadow has already produced a beneficial effect,—a bill not creating fresh crimes, not instituting an oppressive system of coercion, but striking at the root of the evil, by giving the requisite powers for suppressing illegal societies. And obstruction in Parliament has been checked by a reform of procedure, modelled in a great measure on proposals formerly made by Mr Gladstone, and calculated to restore to the House of Commons its rightful control over its own business, whilst leaving the fullest scope for legitimate debate.

"Gentlemen, the struggle is nearly over, and success is all but assured; will you now falter in your policy, or change your mandate?

"Having returned but a week ago from the Australian station, where (in addition to the usual duties of Commander-in-Chief) it has been my task to promote to the utmost of my power the practical union of the empire for national purposes, I beg of you to complete the work which you have begun, and to maintain the existing union of Great Britain and Ireland as the keystone of a united empire.

"With local and social questions my acquaintance is as yet scanty. And I shall hope to find occasion to speak to you on these matters in a very short time. But I am not blind to the great benefits

derived from good cottage or allotment gardens, and I would cordially support any measure which would place these advantages within the reach of labourers generally. The measure proposed by the Government for the relief of agricultural tenants from the burden of tithes appears eminently fair to all classes, and I would do my utmost to enable it to become law.

"Gentlemen, I present myself as a Conservative, as a supporter of the present Government, and as a staunch Unionist.—I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant, GEORGE TRYON, *Rear-Admiral.*"

Such were Tryon's politics. And this address he followed up by another of the same tenor, though entering more into particulars, on the 28th of June, two days before the poll. He also attended many meetings, made many speeches, and worked with his characteristic energy; but it was all of no use: his opponent had too much start of him; he had been nursing the constituency for two years, and understood all about local matters, and these, no doubt, appeared to be of far more consequence to the electors of the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire than the unity of the empire.

Thus was Tryon defeated in the only attempt he ever made to enter Parliament. But it may fairly be doubted whether his talents and great administrative abilities were not employed with greater advantage to his country in the position which he

shortly afterwards occupied—as Admiral Superintendent of Reserves—than they would have been as a private member of the House of Commons.

His bad luck and disappointment, however, did not prevent him from sympathising with his friends in their difficulties and disappointments; and we find him writing again to his old friend Sir Samuel Griffith, the Prime Minister of Queensland, on the 30th January 1888, in the following terms: "I can sympathise with you with all my heart.[1] You had no other course open to you than that you followed, and I am much obliged to you for letting me know the state of the case. It must be recognised (as I openly and proudly do) by all who are acquainted with the history of the naval bill that you, first of all men, did most to bring all the colonies to pull together in this important question of defence. If it had not been for you there would have been no meeting in Sydney, and without that meeting, and the discussion, and the attention that was drawn to the subject among all classes, it is safe to say the subject would not have been ripe when the conference in London took place. No one has rendered such service to Australasia as you have, in all matters that are of importance to all. You have

[1] Note by Sir S. Griffith.—"In consequence of delay on the part of New South Wales and Victoria in agreeing to a basis of contribution towards the cost of the auxiliary squadron until late in 1887, the Government of Queensland was prevented from asking parliamentary sanction until the last week of the session, when a new electoral law having been passed, and a dissolution being imminent, they were compelled to prorogue without passing the bill.

"It was passed in 1890."

prepared the way for a still further expansion of united action for all national purposes."

This was a generous and grateful acknowledgment of Sir Samuel Griffith's co-operation in the matter of the Australian auxiliary squadron, and it shows how the two men worked loyally together to attain the desired object.

Tryon was unemployed from June 1887 to April 1888, and he thoroughly enjoyed this, his second, short holiday, and relaxation from the constant employment and hard work which had hitherto been his lot. No one enjoyed out-of-door sports more thoroughly than he did, especially shooting and fishing. He was rather too heavy for hunting; but he was a very good quick shot, and he had plenty of invitations to shoot — far more than he could accept. He was always a welcome guest at any party or entertainment: his genial manners, his humour, his love of fun, and his wide general information and knowledge of the world, made him a charming companion, and a great accession to any party of sport or pleasure; and he and Lady Tryon paid many pleasant visits to their friends during his brief holiday. It seems rather hard that a man who was so very fond of sport, and who had some of the best shooting and fishing in England and Scotland at his command, should have had such very limited opportunity of enjoying it, and should have been fated to spend so much of his time at sea; and even when on shore, to be glued to a desk, and constantly employed with the details of office

work. It is some consolation, however, to reflect that men so situated, when they *do* get sport, enjoy it a hundred-fold more than those who have plenty of leisure and make it the business of their lives.

Tryon had one peculiar — though perhaps not actually singular—taste. He was very fond of his mother-in-law—in fact, he seems to have been quite devoted to her; and whatever part of the world he was in, his home letters almost invariably convey some kind message to her. Lady Willoughby de Eresby must have been a very charming person, kind, sympathetic, and blessed with a large amount of common-sense—one of those natures that seem to invite confidence, and never betray it. She reciprocated the attachment of her son-in-law, and was very fond and very proud of him. She died in November 1888, after a long illness, at Grimsthorpe in Lincolnshire, where Sir George and Lady Tryon used often to stay.

During one of his visits to Grimsthorpe Tryon had a very bad fall: he was climbing up into an attic over the stable to look at some harness, and slipped and fell, and broke his left arm above the elbow, chipped his elbow, and strained badly the muscles of his shoulder. He suffered a good deal from this injury, and was more or less crippled by it for a long time afterwards. The weak arm came against him on several occasions, but it was not able to curb his restless energy.

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CHAPTER XIII.

ADMIRAL SUPERINTENDENT OF RESERVES.

In April 1888 Sir George Tryon was appointed to the important post of Admiral Superintendent of Reserves. He was as active and energetic in this post as he had been in all the other positions which he had occupied; and the work he did there, and the reforms he effected, were of the highest importance and the most enduring character.

Besides the ordinary duties of his office he was chairman of a committee on coastguard buildings in 1888, and also chairman of a committee on the "Royal Naval Reserves" in 1891. In the latter subject he took the greatest interest at all times, and he attached much importance to the value of our Mercantile Reserves in case of war, and was untiring in his efforts to bring the navy and mercantile marine into closer touch with each other, and to impress upon both how dependent they must necessarily be upon one another.

This was the third time that Tryon had held important posts at the Admiralty: first, as Private

Secretary to the First Lord; next, as Permanent Secretary; and now, as Superintendent of Reserves, which includes the whole of the coastguard service.

Much of the useful work which a naval officer performs in an office at the Admiralty is necessarily of a confidential nature, and does not come to the light in the same way as services performed afloat, though it may be—and often is—of great and permanent importance in the organisation and administration of the naval forces of the country. But in addition to his office work Tryon commanded squadrons in three annual manœuvres, and on all three occasions he showed the highest ability as a strategist.

The annual naval manœuvres, first started in 1885, were at the height of their popularity in 1888, 1889, and 1890. The novelty had not at all worn off, and both officers and men took the greatest interest in them, and occasionally got so excited over the mimic warfare that they were with difficulty prevented from coming to actual blows.

Notwithstanding the occasional absurdities which were perpetrated with regard to the bombardment and ransom of large and populous towns by one or two cruisers, the supposed capture of Atlantic liners by gun-vessels like the Spider, and some other similar vagaries on the part of imaginative commanding officers, the exercise afforded by the manœuvres was admitted by all competent authorities to be of the very greatest benefit to all

concerned, not only in strategy and tactics, but in the actual working of the interior economy of the ships, from the stokehole to the military top, under the conditions of assumed war, so far as it was possible to imitate them,—though of course it was well known to all save the wildest theorists that all kinds of mad pranks were played, which would not have been attempted in actual war. There was also a certain amount of fun and humour admitted into the proceedings, which did no harm, and imparted life and interest to the sham warfare, and helped to lighten the fatigue, which—especially in the case of the crews of some of the smaller vessels —must occasionally have been very great. But in addition to the excellent training and practice afforded to the officers and men of all ranks, and the practical testing of ships of various classes, some graver and more momentous lessons were taught by the manœuvres which took place about this period. To put the matter plainly, the people of Great Britain were given an object-lesson which showed them that their navy was inadequate for their protection.

Whether or not it was intended to make the manœuvres — and especially those of 1888 — an object-lesson as to the insufficiency of the British navy, is a secret only known to those who formulated the plans, and decided upon the strength, of the opposing squadrons. But that the 1888 manœuvres did teach a wholesome lesson is an undoubted fact. It may be remembered that this year 1888 was a year of considerable agitation with regard to the

navy. The vigorous and sustained efforts of our neighbours across the Channel to challenge our naval supremacy called forth the earnest remonstrances of some of the ablest and most experienced of our admirals, against the apathy with which this portentous national danger appeared to be generally regarded. The late distinguished Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby was one of the leaders in this movement, and he was ably supported by some of his brother officers. Meetings were organised in the city of London and at other centres. The press took up the subject, and the 'Times' especially did yeoman service in awakening the country to a sense of the suicidal folly it was committing in letting its naval supremacy go by default.

Then came the naval manœuvres of 1888; and the lessons taught by these were admirably summarised and brought home to the minds of all thoughtful people by the report of the three admirals, which was published early in the following year.[1]

Broadly speaking, the general idea of the 1888 manœuvres was to test the practicability or otherwise of a blockade of an enemy's ports, as carried out during the old wars, but with modern ships and appliances: the blockading squadrons being of course decidedly stronger than the blockaded ones.

A maritime nation with whom hostilities are imminent prepares two squadrons in two ports,

[1] Admirals Sir William Dowell, Sir Vesey Hamilton, and Sir Frederick Richards were appointed to inquire into the manœuvres of 1888, and to report thereon.

some distance apart, ready to commence operations directly war is declared; but before their preparation has been completed, war breaks out, and a blockade of both ports is established.

The blockaded squadrons endeavour to escape, and to carry out certain pre-arranged operations. The blockading squadrons endeavour to prevent their escape; or should they fail to do so, they are to follow them up and try to capture or destroy them with their superior force.

Such were the main features of the problem set before the admirals who were to conduct the manœuvres of 1888; and although there were eight subsidiary problems which it was hoped might be solved (or at any rate have light thrown upon them),—such as the most efficient distribution of a blockading squadron; the best plan for maintaining communication between scouts and the main body of the fleet; most efficient plan of keeping the blockading squadron coaled, &c., &c.,—yet the main object was to test the possibility of blockade under modern conditions.

Tryon was in chief command of the blockaded squadrons; Admiral Baird of the blockaders. The two blockaded ports were Berehaven and Lough Swilly—Tryon himself being at the former, and his lieutenant, Admiral Fitz-Roy, at the latter. Baird's lieutenant was Admiral Rowley, and he was to blockade Lough Swilly, while Baird himself endeavoured to hem in Tryon.

Ireland was supposed to be the enemy's country,

and to be friendly to Tryon, while England and Scotland were friendly to Baird. Tryon at a very early stage of the proceedings christened himself the "Achill Admiral," and he was so known and called by the newspapers all through the proceedings, and his fleet as the "Achill fleet." It was a happy thought, as the term had no particular or too significant meaning.

In a private letter written a few days before the operations commenced, Tryon says he does not expect to be able to do anything against Baird, as the latter is so greatly superior in force. It was true that Baird had seven ironclads to Tryon's five at Berehaven, and Rowley had six to Fitz-Roy's four at Lough Swilly, and the superiority of cruisers on the side of the blockaders was also considerable; but, on the other hand, Tryon was in constant telegraphic communication with his lieutenant at Lough Swilly, and could make or alter his plans and combinations with great rapidity, while Baird could only communicate with Rowley by sea: and there was also to be considered the great wear and tear—to both ships and men—of being at sea, blockading, the initiative being in the hands of the enemy; while the latter could lie comfortably in harbour, take his own time, create false alarms, worry and harass without serious intent, and finally, when the blockaders were worn out, and sick of the cry of "Wolf, wolf!" make the actual attempt to break the blockade. This was the strategy that Tryon carried out, and it was successful.

Hostilities commenced on the 24th of July, and Tryon worried his enemy until the 3d of August, when at 10 P.M. he broke through the blockade with three of his fast ships — the Warspite, Iris, and Severn. His own flagship the Hercules was not fast enough to run the blockade, so he had to remain at anchor for the present; but he had made all his arrangements with his second in command (Fitz-Roy at Lough Swilly), and the latter broke the blockade on the following day, August 4, with his flagship the Rodney and two other ships, and met the Berehaven contingent at a prearranged rendezvous.

Baird's scouts quickly discovered that the blockade had been broken by several of the enemy's ships; and his position then having become quite untenable, he raised the blockade of both ports, sent Rowley to defend Liverpool, and proceeded himself to Portland to coal, and to be ready to protect the mouth of the Thames and the metropolis of the empire.

In the meantime Fitz-Roy, with the two sections of the Achill fleet which had broken the blockade, proceeded round the north coast of Scotland and destroyed Aberdeen, Grimsby, Newcastle, and other ports, with their shipping, and then returned to Lough Swilly.

Tryon on the raising of the blockade left Berehaven on the 5th, and went to Lough Swilly, where he joined the remainder—that is, the slow ships—of his own second division; the fast ships having gone raiding with Fitz-Roy. He then went to Liverpool

and destroyed the shipping, and claimed to have captured the Belleisle, which was there guarding the port.

Baird then united his forces, and fell back on the Downs and remained there for the protection of London, until the cessation of hostilities, Tryon being practically in command of the English Channel, all the trade, and all the coast of England and Scotland except the mouth of the Thames, until hostilities ceased on the 20th August.

There was, of course, a good deal of imagination about the various operations, as there always must be about mimic warfare; but the lessons taught were of the first importance. It was shown that blockades carried on under the old conditions were impossible — at any rate, without a very much greater superiority of force than Baird possessed over Tryon. And it was clearly demonstrated what mischief a squadron of fast ships could do when they had once broken the blockade. These facts were brought home to the minds of all men who read their newspapers; and the argument was clinched by the report of the three admirals, which has been previously alluded to.

This report was a long one, and entered exhaustively into many technical subjects, but some of the concluding paragraphs are worth quoting, as it is in some respects a historical document. The admirals say:—

"The main lesson which these manœuvres emphasise is that Great Britain, whose maritime

supremacy is her life, is very far from being as strong as she should be on the seas, either in *personnel* or *matériel*. . . .

"If England could 'consistently with national honour' control the question of peace or war, there would be no need for haste in bringing up her naval forces to the standard required for insuring, under Providence, a successful issue to a struggle for the freedom of the seas; but as there seems nothing to support the belief that she would have any option in the matter, when it suited another great Power to challenge her maritime position, we are decidedly of opinion that no time should be lost in placing her navy beyond comparison with that of any two Powers. . . .

"No other nation has any such interest in the maintenance of an undoubted superiority at sea as has England, whose seaboard is her frontier.

"England ranks among the Great Powers of the world by virtue of the naval position she has acquired in the past, and which has never been seriously challenged since the close of the last great war.

"The defeat of her navy means to her the loss of India and her Colonies, and of her place among the nations.

"Without any desire to question the sums annually granted by Parliament for the maintenance of the Services, we cannot but note the disproportion in the appropriation when the magnitude of the issues involved is taken into consideration.

"It would, in our opinion, be far more in consonance with the requirements of the nation by the provision of an adequate fleet to render invasion an impossibility than to enter into costly arrangements to meet an enemy on our shores (instead of destroying his 'Armadas' off our shores), for under the conditions in which it would be possible for a Great Power to invade England, nothing could avail her, as, the command of the sea once being lost, it would not require the landing of a single man upon her shores to bring her to an ignominious capitulation, for by her navy she must stand or fall."

Such were the concluding words of the report of the three admirals (Sir William Dowell, Sir Vesey Hamilton, and Sir Frederick Richards). They were momentous words, and the sentiments expressed therein have found many an echo, in pamphlets, leading articles, and speeches both in and out of Parliament.

The admirals said that "no time should be lost in placing her navy beyond comparison with that of any two Powers." But our parliamentary rulers were satisfied with a standard of equality with any two Powers, meaning of course the two next strongest Powers.

It is not proposed to enter into a discussion here as to what our comparative naval strength should be in order to render this country reasonably safe in case of war with a strong maritime Power, or

a possible combination of several; but it is certain that no one was more emphatic than Tryon in his expressions of opinion as to the absolute necessity for Great Britain to maintain a preponderating navy.

Having opened the subject of naval manœuvres, it will probably be convenient to allude briefly to the three manœuvres upon which Tryon was engaged, before passing on to other matters which engaged his attention during the time he held the appointment of Superintendent of Reserves.

The plan of the manœuvres of 1889 differed from those of 1888 in so far that no actual blockade was attempted; but the problem was embodied in the idea that the British fleet should endeavour to mask, from a strategic base, the forces of an enemy, whose two fortified ports and places of assembly were Queenstown and Berehaven, and the latter on his part was to endeavour to raid the coasts of Great Britain, to capture British merchant-ships, and if possible to catch a portion of the British fleet at a disadvantage.

The two principal antagonists were the same as before, Tryon and Baird; but they had changed places: Tryon was now the British Admiral and Baird the enemy. Their seconds in command were also changed, Tryon having Tracey as his second, and Baird having D'Arcy Irvine. Both the Commanders-in-Chief had slow ships for their flagships, and both the Rear-Admirals had fast ships.

Baird's headquarters were at Queenstown, and Tryon's at Milford Haven, which he afterwards shifted to Falmouth.

The principal features of these manœuvres consisted—first, of an attempt by Baird's fast battleships to rush the Thames, by proceeding separately and by different routes to a rendezvous off Dover, and there uniting; secondly, of the sealing up by Tryon of Baird's slow ships (including his own flagship) in Queenstown; thirdly, of the raiding operations of D'Arcy-Irvine with the Anson, Collingwood, and Inflexible on the East Coast of Scotland and England; and fourthly, of the capture of the Collingwood and Inflexible on the day before the cessation of hostilities.

The attempt of Baird's fast ships, under D'Arcy-Irvine, to evade Tryon's ships and get up Channel by different routes was frustrated, and the Camperdown, Hero, and Immortalité were captured.

There were all kinds of subsidiary operations, such as attacks on unfortified Irish ports, the defence by submarine mines of Lough Swilly by the Hecla and Inflexible; the independent operations of cruisers on both sides; and, finally, the raiding operations, and destruction of shipping and open towns on the East Coast by the squadron under D'Arcy-Irvine. The ultimate fate of this squadron was remarkable, and was supposed to have taught a lesson in strategy. The Anson and Collingwood (both fast ships), after their unsuccessful attempt to rush the English Channel,

were, after filling up with coal, sent round the north of Scotland, and inflicted heavy ransoms on Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and other towns; and they were on their way back to their own country by the same route when they met the slow but powerful Inflexible, which had been ordered round there from Lough Swilly by a telegram from Baird, who was himself blockaded in Queenstown by a superior force.

D'Arcy-Irvine, with the addition of this third first-class battleship, considered his squadron strong enough to undertake further operations on the East Coast,—a course that he was evidently justified in taking, as he was doubtless aware that Tryon's principal squadron was blockading Baird in Queenstown. So D'Arcy-Irvine proceeded south again, looked in at Edinburgh, hoping to catch some of the enemy's ships there, but finding none, went on to the southward; bombarded Newcastle, Sunderland, and other towns; and on the afternoon of the 28th of August—the day before hostilities were to cease—when off Scarborough, the weather being rather thick and hazy, the squadron met a squadron of the enemy under Rear-Admiral Tracey, consisting of the Rodney, Howe, Ajax, two belted cruisers, and one protected cruiser. D'Arcy-Irvine ordered a retreat, and the three ships made off to the northward at their best speed; but the slow Inflexible was quickly caught, surrounded, and captured. The Collingwood was caught shortly afterwards, and the Anson with

the Rear-Admiral alone escaped. The manœuvres ended on the following day.

Tryon had been duly informed of D'Arcy-Irvine's depredations on the East Coast, and sent a powerful detachment to interrupt him, and interrupt him it did, capturing two out of three of his ships.

The umpires for these manœuvres were four in number. Two of them — viz., Admirals Bowden-Smith and Morant — were on the "B" side, or Baird's fleet; and the other two — viz., Admirals Lord Charles Scott and Sir R. Molyneux — were on the "A" side, or Tryon's fleet.

The "A" umpires found as follows: "'A's' success was unquestionable; but his fleet was not strong enough to admit of his protecting the East Coast of Scotland, nor were his cruisers sufficiently numerous to adequately protect commerce; but the enemy's losses would have given 'A' a freer hand if operations had lasted. A large number of merchant-ships were captured by 'B.'"

Admirals Bowden-Smith and Morant found that "the attempted raid on the Downs, Thames, &c., was unsuccessful. The Anson-Collingwood trip was successful up to the time that two of the squadron were captured and the Anson chased off. The success of 'B' seems to have been in his cruiser work; six of these having captured ninety-five merchant-ships of 162,000 tons, without having been captured by 'A,' though chased on several occasions."

Tryon was as keen as possible to win these war

games, in three of which he took a leading part; but he was a generous adversary.

Speaking of these manœuvres some years afterwards, Lord Charles Scott says: "I recollect, in connection with the manœuvres of 1889, when I was an umpire, that Tryon was most anxious everything should be as fair as possible, and after I had ruled the Camperdown — commanded by King — out of action and captured, he asked me if I could not find a loop-hole, so that he might let King (his enemy) go back; but I could see no other conclusion under the rules than the one I had come to."

The manœuvres of 1890 were the most uninteresting of the whole series. The principal object was declared to be as follows: To ascertain under what conditions a hostile fleet could maintain itself on an important trade-route, and interrupt the traffic, always endeavouring to avoid a general engagement; also under what conditions a slightly superior British fleet could successfully manœuvre to bring the hostile force to action, or compel it to return to port. There were also several subsidiary objects, which need not be dwelt upon.

Tryon was again in command of the fleet which was supposed to be the British fleet, and again he had Tracey as his second in command; but this time his opponent was Sir Michael Seymour, who had Admiral Robinson as his second in command.

The enemy's fleet was given twenty-four hours' start, and moved off to the westward of what is

called the Chops of the Channel. Reconnoitring with cruisers was permitted before hostilities actually commenced; but the British fleet was not allowed to leave its ports in England until the hostile fleet had been twenty-four hours clear away from Berehaven in the extreme west of Ireland.

Tryon's task was on this occasion an impossible one. He might as well have hunted for a needle in a bundle of hay as go and look for Sir Michael Seymour in the wide Atlantic. Seymour had nothing to do but to keep out of his way and avoid him, which was not a difficult matter with a squadron of equally fast ships and a good supply of cruisers, so long as his coal lasted. Coal was the real question: and Sir Michael Seymour proved the possibility of coaling at sea in the North Atlantic; but the fact that he was enabled to do so, under exceptionally favourable circumstances, did not appear to prove that it would be always, or even generally, possible.

There was an attack on the British fleet by hostile torpedo-boats from a base at Alderney, which the umpires decided was unsuccessful; and there was a good deal of useful information gained in the practical work of scouting with fast cruisers: but the main body of the two hostile fleets never got within 300 miles of each other. Seymour simply went to the position which he had selected on one of the principal trade-routes, and being able to coal his ships at sea, he maintained that position until

the time given for the cessation of hostilities. Tryon was heard to complain that he thought his adversary would have played what he was pleased to call a more sporting game, and tried a little closer manœuvring; but Sir Michael Seymour was not so soft as to do anything of the kind: he played the game he was sent to play, successfully, and avoided an action, as he was distinctly told to do. It is true that Tryon with his fleet and cruisers protected the entrance to the English Channel; but if Seymour was enabled—as he certainly was—to intercept a large amount of the traffic some 300 miles farther to the westward, the protection on the interior lines would not appear to have been of much use.

It has already been observed that there was a good deal of imagination in all the naval manœuvres, as there always must be in sham warfare of all kinds. But many of the absurdities were rendered still more absurd by the fact that some of the combatants declined to play by the rules. In some instances they thought it rather fine to go on fighting after their ships had been sunk (according to the rules) half-a-dozen times over; and one admiral went so far as to censure one of his captains for striking his colours after being under an overwhelming fire for twenty minutes, the rules saying that fifteen minutes was the time in which a ship was to consider herself out of action under the circumstances. It was very much as if in a game of chess one of the players was to decline to

allow one of his pieces to be removed from the board, notwithstanding that it had been fairly taken. The "dashing behaviour" of some of the torpedo-boat commanders was also considered—by some critics—to be highly commendable; entirely forgetful of the fact that they were not really being fired at, and ought therefore—if there was to be any element of common-sense in the evolutions—to have played according to the rules.

The British naval manœuvres called forth many criticisms, of various degrees of ability, from both home and foreign critics. Perhaps one of the ablest of these was an article by Vice-Admiral Batsch, of the German navy, published in the 'Deutsche-Revue,' November and December 1889. His criticisms are applied to the manœuvres of both 1888 and 1889. After pointing out clearly the large element of unreality which entered into "the British sea war-games," he is most emphatic in his condemnation of the strategy of evasion, or, in other words, of squadrons dodging superior forces in order to make attacks on open towns; and he argues that such a policy never has been, and never can be, successful, or produce any real effect upon the issues of a naval war, the main object of which should be to gain a decisive victory over the organised forces of the enemy before any subsidiary operations are undertaken.

Admiral Batsch's remarks on this subject are very interesting, and worthy of quotation. With special reference to the rush for the mouth of the Thames

by Baird's fast ships on different routes in the 1889 manœuvres, he says:—

"As the representation of tactical defeat which leads in war to a crisis is not feasible, the 'general idea' takes another direction, and what in actual warfare at sea would only follow upon a general engagement being therefore of secondary importance (we mean the coast attack), becomes the principal aim. Hence arises the fault that such attacks on the coast, or rather on harbours, are undertaken, although the enemy's main strength is still unbroken. In order to arrive at this end, all means must be employed to avoid meeting the enemy's main force; and whereas in actual warfare all instructions are calculated to produce a meeting with it, and to break it up, in sham war the whole thing turns upon stratagems and clever dodges, by means of which you manage to follow the rules of the game. According to these the undisturbed possession of a harbour for eight hours constitutes a victory. In order to prevent the enemy from gaining such a victory in the Thames, the English admiral in 1888 steamed thither with all his force after the Irish fleet had slipped out from the harbour which he was blockading, and meanwhile the western ports were requisitioned behind his back. This time the Irish admiral was not blockaded, and could go where he liked, and so planned an attack on the Thames. As, when you have to avoid your enemy, speed becomes the principal thing, he kept back the slower ships of his fleet, and despatched

the faster ships in two divisions by different routes, so as to escape notice. Either by mere accident or by the remarkable ability of his opponent [Tryon], the separate divisions fell in with superior forces of the enemy, and three ships had to strike their flags, in obedience to the manœuvre rules—that is to say, nearly half the attacking squadron. The stratagem was discovered, and the plan had to be given up, a further result being that the Irish fleet, which was originally about 25 per cent weaker than that of England, became now less than its opponent by 43 per cent, and in consequence all ideas of plans on a large scale had to be given up.

"The fault inherent in the plan which failed has already been noticed: but its unfortunate execution teaches us that an admiral should not divide his strength in the presence of the unbroken and united force of the enemy; that he should not leave that force out of consideration; and that attempts to elude such an unbroken force are very objectionable. Thus the capture of the Hero, Camperdown, and Immortalité was the first great incident of this war-game, and, for that reason, of interest, because it gave the English admiral, Tryon, the opportunity of a movement which hindered the junction of the enemy's divisions, and afforded a victory to Tracey, his second in command."

The above is a very fair criticism of the events which have been already referred to; and although it must be admitted that the rules of the game were not always strictly adhered to, there is no reason to

doubt that a careful consideration of what was and what was not admissible by the rules guided the strategic plans of the admirals rather than what would or would not be admissible in war. This is inevitable in all sham warfare, and is no reproach to any one concerned—neither those who framed the rules nor those who had to be guided by them. The only mistake is in supposing that any rules can be made which will simulate the real conditions of war in its most essential features. All that sensible people look for is a game which will prove to be a useful, an interesting, and an exhilarating exercise, which will make people think, and perhaps talk—in fact, produce a general interest in the problems of naval warfare—and this our naval manœuvres certainly have done.

It was almost inevitable that in a popularly governed country, where everybody wants to know everything, the manœuvres should have been looked upon as a national show for the benefit of the British public, who, as they were paying for the show, wanted to know all about it from day to day, and expected to see every morning in their newspaper exactly what each side was doing, and why they did it, and also what they were going to do; and as spies are not hanged during peace manœuvres, the British public was usually gratified.

With reference to the manœuvres of 1890, which, as already remarked, were certainly the least interesting, from a popular point of view, of the series in which Tryon was engaged, he says of them in a

private letter: "Though the manœuvres of 1890 have not been very sensational, they have been very useful to officers and men, quite as much so as in previous years." And again: "For all useful purposes the manœuvres this year were the best I have had; for the press and for sensation, the worst."

Brief allusion was made in the early part of this chapter to the useful work that Tryon did in perfecting our system of Naval Reserves, and in bringing both the officers and men of the Mercantile Marine into closer touch with the Royal Navy. He was chairman of the committee appointed to inquire into and report upon the whole subject; and the final report of the committee was submitted in 1891, the year that Tryon ceased his connection with the Reserves, and took command of the Mediterranean station.

The committee was a strong one, including such names as Allen Young, C. Rivers Wilson, Thos. H. Ismay, and two or three naval officers. It went very exhaustively into the subject, collecting a large amount of evidence from various sources, and the report, which was printed as a confidential document, is of great interest. Tryon was the moving spirit in this committee, and his special views and language can be traced in every paragraph of the report, which has since become the working foundation of our present system of Reserves.

England has passed through various phases of thought and action in supplying her navy with men in times of emergency, of which the press-

gang and the offering of bounties are the two most notable.

The pressgang appears to be out of the question in the present day: it was a barbarous and unjust method at the best of times, and even more objectionable and contrary to the spirit of a free people than the universal conscription which is carried out on the Continent.

The bounty system is also very objectionable, as well as being very wasteful, and it attracts many useless characters ready to desert on the first opportunity.

The problem of manning the navy is as old as the navy itself. Many plausible arguments have been advanced to show that England ought logically to enforce a universal maritime conscription as a reply to the military conscriptions in force on the Continent, seeing that she must stand or fall by her navy: but the idea is repugnant to the great majority of the people; and if it is within the bounds of possibility to man the navy on the voluntary principle, it is for many reasons better to do so.

The problem is, and always has been, a very complicated one, involving, as it does, so many diverse interests. Moreover, it is constantly changing, as the conditions of naval requirements and the constitution of our mercantile marine change. For, at whatever period of our naval history we look at the question, we shall see that the eyes of our administrators have ever been fixed upon our mer-

chant navy as the source from which they hoped to fill up the ranks of the Royal Navy in time of need, either by force or persuasion.

Probably the greatest shock that was ever given to the minds of those who look upon the merchant navy of England as a practically inexhaustible mine from which the Royal Navy may supply its wants, was given by the disclosure of the fact that foreigners are largely taking the place of our own countrymen in both steamers and sailing-ships trading under the British flag, and owned by British owners. This was pointed to as a sure sign of the decay of our nautical pre-eminence. But up to the present time it does not seem to have produced the disastrous effects which were expected of it. We still have a Reserve of seamen, which, if not so large on paper as that of some of our neighbours, has at any rate sea-experience; and they are all volunteers.

The reorganisation, the popularisation, and the general improvement of this force was a subject well worthy of Tryon's talent and energy and administrative powers; and he worked at it with his characteristic zeal.

In the old days of sailing-ships, if a man was a sailor he could very soon be turned into a useful man-of-war's man. The handling of sails was the main point, and the gun-drills and smallarm-drills were very secondary considerations. Of course a merchant seaman did not even then drop into his place at once, as he had to learn a new sort of discipline, smartness, &c.; but he was very much

nearer to his work than a merchant seaman imported suddenly into the Royal Navy to-day would be, without previous training: hence it becomes necessary to institute all our elaborate arrangements of drill-ships and batteries for training a certain number of men, and also to give them a retaining fee, and some other advantages, with the view of ensuring their services on a sudden emergency.

Doubts have often been expressed as to whether our Reserves (both naval and military) would respond promptly to the call in case of war. Tryon's committee, after making themselves thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances of the men, and their aspirations and sentiments, express the opinion that there is no reason to doubt that they will answer loyally to their engagements whenever called upon; and it is not unlikely that they will prove to be as good fighting material as men forced to serve through enrolment in a maritime conscription, or men dragged into the service by the old-fashioned pressgang. The proof of this pudding, however, can only be in the eating; and we may make any speculations we like in the meantime.

The question of stokers—or "firemen," as they call them—was a very important one in the deliberations of the committee. A large proportion of the complement of a modern man-of-war is made up of the engine-room staff, and they are of at least as much importance as the so-called seamen, who, as a rule, are not seamen at all, but simply sea-gunners; very

highly trained, no doubt, and exactly what are required for fighting a modern man-of-war, in conjunction with a certain number (and, it may be added, a considerable and constantly increasing number) of skilled mechanics, and firemen to keep up a good head of steam.

The difficulty with the stokers appears to lie in the fact that the best of them do not care to join the Naval Reserve for the sake of a small retaining fee, and be under the obligation to come out whenever called upon. They prefer to wait, and "take their chance when the time comes"; meaning, that they expect, if there is a war, there will be a large bounty offered, and that skilled hands would also be able to command a high rate of wages in case of a national emergency. Not perhaps very patriotic, but still astute, from their own point of view.

There was one point upon which Tryon did not agree with the majority of his committee, and that was concerning the dress of the Royal Naval Reserve men. The question of dress may seem to some to be a very trivial matter so long as the men themselves are of good quality, but Tryon did not consider it so; he attached very great importance to it, and evidently regarded it as one of those subtle sentiments of human nature which, although men, at any rate, do not care to acknowledge them, yet exercise considerable influence over their thoughts and feelings, and hence over their actions also. He was most anxious that the Reserve men, when called out for training, should wear a dress as

nearly as possible the same as men of the regular navy, and thought that any deviation from this would be looked upon as a badge of inferiority. He evidently felt very strongly on this point, and in a semi-official letter to the First Lord he gives his views on the subject as follows:—

"I am, unfortunately perhaps, one of those who attach importance to *esprit de corps*, and to the adoption of all reasonable measures for increasing the respect that R.N.R. men have for the service and also for themselves, and, further, to look forward to the possibility that any day they may be called on to serve alongside and with the men of the Royal Navy, of which they form a part. I assume the object is, and should be, to make the Reserve as nearly equal as possible in efficiency to the permanent force, and I believe it to be the object with all nations to do everything possible to make the Reserves take their place naturally and easily alongside their comrades. There will be no difference between man and man during war. On board it will be the best man up. Those in the navy proper, no doubt,—especially in some ships of novel construction,—will be especially expert. Those in the Reserve will bring with them other experiences beyond those due only to Royal Naval training that will not be without value; and I do not mind going so far as to say our seamen of the R.N. of to-day are not so hard or so helpful as they used to be. It is probably due to the fact that from boyhood up they have been so cared for, and

their every want attended to; and this forms, perhaps, the only weak point in our continuous-service system.

"I well remember that men who had long experience in the mercantile marine, who were in the Naval Brigade in the Crimea, came conspicuously to the front as stalwart, helpful men of power and endurance; and so I feel sure would be the case again, and probably more conspicuously so. I well remember several conversations on this point with my friend the late Sir William Hewett, who probably had more war experience than any of his contemporaries; he was very strong on this point. . . . Personally I am not in the least wedded to any particular form of dress, so long as it is markedly similar to that they would wear on board when embarked — viz., to that of men in the Royal Navy."

He then goes on to say that he has consulted numbers of people who are qualified to give an opinion as to the feelings of the R.N.R. men on the subject, and they all agree with him in thinking that to make any marked distinction in their dress would be a great mistake, "as stamping them, as it were, with a badge of inferiority during a time of peace. It is inconsistent, because the distinctive dress would be removed should the occasion ever arise, such as is the cause of the existence of the force, when they would serve alongside our seamen in the fleet on terms of perfect equality in every respect."

There are some who are inclined to doubt the value of the Royal Naval Reserve, in view of the high technical training which is required for working a modern ship of war, and think that the money spent upon it would be better expended in strengthening the regular naval forces of the country. It is unnecessary to argue the point here. Tryon at any rate had no doubts upon the subject, and was a firm believer in the seamen of the Reserve. Whether he had the same faith in the efficiency of the officers of the R.N.R. does not appear by his writings.

It was during the time that Tryon was in charge of the Reserves that the agitation took place which led to the famous Naval Defence Act of 1889, by which the country undertook to spend 21 millions upon building seventy ships of war in five years, ten of them to be battleships. There was, as might be expected, considerable discussion as to the designs of these battleships, and Tryon amongst others was consulted on the subject. He was very emphatic as to the necessity of a high freeboard, and the consequent ability of the ships to steam head to wind in rough water; he considered that 23 feet was the least height admissible for the axis of the guns of the principal armament to be above the water-line, and that 380 feet between the perpendiculars was the least length that should be accepted. Our naval readers may remember that these were the figures which were finally adopted in the new designs, except in the case of the Hood,

which, being a turret instead of a barbette ship, had to be satisfied with considerably lower guns, accepting in lieu the better protection which is supposed to be afforded by the turret system.

Tryon was a strong opponent of monster guns, and considers a gun of about 45 tons weight sufficient for all purposes. He says the 100-ton guns were forced upon us by scientists and manufacturers, and that the navy never asked for them or wanted them. This may be the case, speaking in general terms; but the navy was not unanimous on the subject, and it is scarcely to be expected that they should be. It would, perhaps, be more accurate to say that the 100-ton gun was sent afloat in deference to a certain class of public opinion. Some of our readers may possibly remember the kind of argument that was used on this subject. It was pointed out that another nation (Italy) was preparing to mount 100-ton guns afloat; that the value of them was an unknown quantity; that they might prove to be all-powerful; and that in view of this doubt it was very unwise for a country situated like Great Britain to be without them. This was really the argument that sent the 100 tons afloat in British ships. It is easy now to be wise after the event; but Tryon appears from the first to have been opposed to the very big guns.

It is certain that if a really good gun of about 12 inches calibre and 50 tons weight had been in existence in England in 1889, the "new battleships" of that date — viz., the Royal Sovereign

class—would have been armed with it; but no such gun was in existence, while on the other hand we had the 68-ton gun of 13·5 calibre, with all its details worked out. It was ready, and the ideal gun was not ready, and could not be got ready in time, therefore the former was adopted; but the latter has since been made, and the "new battleships" of 1893 design are armed with it. It is a wire-gun, and probably one of the best in the world.

One of the duties of the Admiral Superintendent of Reserves is to visit all the coastguard stations in Great Britain and Ireland, and all the drill-ships of the R.N.R. Tryon enjoyed these visiting tours, for although they were hard work and involved some fatiguing journeys, they were a relief from the monotony of office work, and gave him an opportunity of seeing something of his own country, a country concerning which most naval officers know very little, as they are nearly always out of it.

The assumption by Tryon of the title "Achill Admiral" has already been alluded to in an early part of this chapter. It was during the 1888 manœuvres that he used this term; and for the sake of adding some life, and as much reality as possible, to the mimic warfare, he assumed that he belonged to the independent kingdom of Achill, which was at war with another powerful maritime country.

It was shortly after the conclusion of these 1888 manœuvres that Tryon took up his parable and wrote an account of the defensive forces of the

imaginary kingdom of Achill; and as it is obvious that this parable contains his views upon some important questions of national defence, and of the proper organisation and use of the Reserves, it will not be without interest if we quote some of it. It will be seen that he did not mean to indicate France or England, or any other country specially; but that the kingdom of Achill was a purely ideal State, a maritime Power with certain far-reaching interests, which he as Admiral of the Achill fleet was suddenly called upon to defend.

"ACHILL.

"The people of the island of Achill, which with that of Rutland form the territory of the kingdom of Achill, are an ancient and interesting race. Their military organisation is complete. They look to the sea for a harvest, but are in all respects self-contained for all essential purposes of existence.

"War suddenly broke out in 1888, by an act of war perpetrated by a neighbouring Power, who though more powerful at sea was not nearly so strong as a military Power. As a nation they are world-wide, and rely on being strong at sea for their protection against invasion, and for the maintenance of their trade, commerce, and colonies. To the Achill people these points are of far less importance. The superior strength of their army secured them against invasion by their neighbours, and as to commerce, trade, and colonies, they

involve no question of vital importance to the nation.

"At the outbreak of war I found myself in command of the Achill fleet: at that moment it happened to be divided between two ports, and the enemy at once asserted his numerical naval superiority by blockading both ports, which, however, were strongly defended against a direct naval attack; but no provision had been made to stave off an attack on the shipping within, if delivered by torpedo-boats, and I had, with much regret, in the first place to undertake this task with the resources of the fleet, for this practically diminished the strength of my fleet.

"The Achill Intelligence Department informed me of the strength of the enemy at sea, and of his resources.

"The army, proud of its tradition and history, burnt to be released from the limitations imposed upon it by the foreshores of their island home, and to enable me to exert the whole power of the fleet afloat spared no sacrifice on their part, for they recognised that until a superiority on the high seas was established, no field out of their own country was open to them.

"The people, who for long years had cheerfully borne the burden of an expenditure devoted to naval purposes, were most indignant when they found the naval forces of Achill were not equal to their present need: the Government of the day was hurled from office, new and untried men, the

loudest and most skilled agitators, were put to the fore, and at first there was much confusion. It was not the fault of one Administration that things were not as they should be—it was the fault of many successive ones; but the blow fell with most effect on those who happened to be in office, though they really had done much to rectify the baneful result of long years of Government that yielded to popular and political pressure, a pressure which at times no Minister could resist.

"It is now perhaps right that I should point out what had gone wrong, and why the large sums sanctioned in the annual naval budget had not provided a sufficient fleet.

"Some years back, as a principle, the Naval Department was held responsible not only for providing a fleet out of the sums voted annually for naval purposes, but for the defence of home ports; indeed, as a principle, for whatever could be employed against ships, or as a protection against an attack by ships. It was at that time in vain for naval men to say, as they did, 'The fleets of those to whom we may one day be opposed in war are rapidly increasing.' The voice of seamen was unheard in Parliament and in the country, and if any one raised a warning voice he was looked upon as somewhat of a bore.

"The defence section was always present in force. The defences were criticised by the public; and urged by the military voice, backed by local members, it was very strong and powerful in influencing

public opinion. Ships were built suited perhaps for aiding in defence, thus lessening the military votes; and the Achill Government had a considerable force of vessels suited for service in close waters, and of gun-vessels (carrying large guns), which are the largest and weakest and most vulnerable of gun-carriages, and the least reliable for defensive purposes; and the active fleet was small indeed.

"Fortunately a scare drew public attention to this, and after long discussion it was decided that the defences of the country should, especially as to the principles that directed expenditure, be placed in the hands of a Minister of Defence; and this was effected. Still, it is to be observed, 'Defence' was the guiding principle of administration.

"With the Minister of Defence began what may be termed the reign of joint commissions. Commissions and committees composed of naval and military men sat on every subject connected with the national forces. The military and political voice was all-powerful, and on one side; it led to but a repetition of the former 'rob-Peter-to-pay-Paul' state of affairs. Ports were defended by batteries that were insufficient for their purposes, and almost every report ended by some such expression: 'The Commission urge the instant construction of the works which are described in the schedule attached. They are aware that in themselves they are insufficient; but by the aid of armoured defence-vessels, and gun-

vessels, which the Naval Department should provide, they consider they will give a reasonable security, and obtain the result the Minister of Defence has expressed to us his desire to obtain.'

"It became clear the sea-going fleet was being starved, because it was called on to do that which could be more securely, and better, and at less cost, effected by other means.

"Fortunately another war seemed imminent, and this called the attention of the country to its sea-going force; it took stock of it, and compared what was at disposal with what it was likely to be opposed to: the result was not assuring, and it caused another change in the administrative system, which was only effected at great cost. The country spoke out and said it was determined to be strong at sea. The voice that spoke said, 'We live on an island; as a nation, if we are not strong at sea, we are nowhere when weighed among nations.' The result was that an Administration was formed, and within it was an Admiralty that was held responsible for the maintenance of the sea-going fleet. All defence questions, naval and military, were provided for in a somewhat elaborate system, which I will sketch.

"The Admiralty was held responsible primarily for the expenditure of such sums as were annually voted for purely naval purposes—viz., for the provision of the sea-going fleet. In the first instance, at the outbreak of a war, it was contemplated that the action of the fleet would be world-wide; but should the combinations against us be overpower-

ing, it would be less extended; and at all times when necessary it would actively co-operate with defence measures.

"Secondly, the Admiralty provides,—and entirely independent of the fleet usually kept near home, which was part of the active fleet available for service anywhere,—out of a fund annually voted, ships and a naval organisation that intimately worked in harmony with the military forces on well-established lines; and practically this part of the naval force never quitted the country till, at all events, the supremacy at sea was established, when they became invaluable as a part of the attacking force.

"The country was divided into districts. A general was placed in command, and on his staff was a naval officer who was responsible to keep him informed on all points connected with the coast defences provided under the naval system for his district, much in the same way as other members of his staff are responsible on the subjects specially assigned to them — viz., cavalry, artillery, infantry, &c.

"In each district the regular forces were the nucleus of the whole force, which was made up of the regular permanent forces of the country, and of the yeomanry, militia, and volunteers, and as a special feature of the system was a naval defence force. The members of the latter were in part taken from the standing navy; with them were associated Royal Naval Volunteers, and in addi-

tion there was, under a military organisation, a coast-defence force.

"I will now describe the composition of the Royal Naval Volunteer force, and of the coast-defence force.

"The Royal Naval Volunteers were divided into corps, the corps into companies and sections. While all were trained to big and quick-firing guns, and to rifles, some companies and sections were specially trained as torpedoists, others as artillerymen, others as skilled boatmen, others in handling, driving, and taking charge of steam-engines and boilers, and boats. Many yachtsmen entered this corps, and the keen interest they took in their work during peace tended to establish the high reputation they subsequently won when tried on service.

"The coast-defence force was raised partly in the principal seaports, and largely in the manufacturing and mining districts, and the companies and sections of the different corps were carefully arranged as to the qualifications of the men for the performance of duties other than those of a military character. Then each corps had a proportion of men skilled by practice obtained in their everyday life occupation in handling coal. When enrolled and so employed they received a coaling-suit, and a special rate of pay, which varied with the amount of coal handled, and the time occupied, and the actual amount of work done. There were also companies composed of

men who were artisans, and who, when employed at their trade, received a special rate of pay in addition to that they received as soldiers. These corps were very popular, and had the advantage of giving employment to a class of men who would be out of work during a period of war, but who largely assisted towards the maintenance of our fleet in full activity, and at the same time as soldiers they materially added to the strength of the garrisons of the seaports.

"In response to my application, ultimately 300 men of the coast-defence force and 100 of the Royal Naval Volunteers were sent to Berehaven, and the same number to Lough Swilly. They soon provided a good defence against torpedo attack; they established mine-fields, and batteries to protect them; they took entire charge of all the harbour defences, and a body of men were constantly employed on coaling duties, and forty coal-trimmers were always available. I found among other trades I had nineteen men skilled as boiler-makers and fitters available, and very useful work they did aiding vessels that required small defects to be made good. The Royal Naval Volunteers took special charge of the booms, and manned patrol-boats, and guarded the signal stations. The presence of these corps secured that the stay of ships of war in port was reduced to a minimum, while their efficiency at sea was maintained at a maximum; and further, so many volunteered for service afloat that I was enabled to

fill up all vacancies in the fleet as they occurred. In addition to the above, they armed and manned three powerful tugs, two of which patrolled each night outside the defences. These vessels were so formidable to torpedo-boats that the enemy once having tasted their quality took care not to try them again.

"The possession by the Achill Government of the two forces, organised and disciplined on the lines sketched above, enabled me to discount some of the enemy's vessels, for the Intelligence Department informed me that my opponent did not possess such forces. They virtually increased, for all practical purposes, my force, and to a corresponding extent lessened the comparative inferiority of it.

"It was clear from the first that the great changes which have occurred since the last naval war had not been sufficiently recognised. A fleet was formerly restrained by adverse winds, by want of wind, by contrary currents and the effects of tides: it is now free as to many considerations that were once binding. A fleet that in old days could spare one or two thousand men, and yet retain sufficient men on board to fight an action, can now spare but a few score, and can ill afford to spare so many. On the other hand, ships formerly could keep the seas for months, but now require to replenish with coal every few days. If a fleet is to be maintained in full efficiency it must be able to coal rapidly, and with ease to its crew,

on whom incessant day and night work devolves, and on whom so many new demands are made, and this can only be done when suitable arrangements and appliances are provided for the equipment and maintenance of the active fleet.

"The result of the new arrangement, which had only been in force three years when war broke out, had happily even then made itself felt.

"In the first instance, all concurred that the total war expenditure of all countries has some limit. It was decided that the active navy should be superior to any sea-going force that could within reason be combined against it by other nations; and further, that it should be equal to the task of giving a reasonable protection to our sea-going and distant interests.

"The limitation of expenditure was clear; it was dependent on the forces other nations chose to create: we regretted and begrudged the expenditure; but if our peaceful argument did not succeed in convincing others of the unwisdom and wrong in expending so much of the national income in creating forces not required for national defensive reasons, our hands were forced, and the country declared it was not prepared to rely on the forbearance of others for its national existence.

"The army it was decided to maintain was regulated by the following reasons: To be efficient in force; to provide for such demands as were likely to be made on us, due to our possession of distant responsibilities that we were bound

to maintain; and a sufficient force for home purposes.

"The navy proper, and the army proper, were the life, soul, and backbone of the defensive system.

"When a 'defence' question arose, it was considered on its merits in each case. If the defence was to be given by means of forts, mine-fields, and torpedoes, it was provided. In other—but very rare—cases, ships might be considered absolutely necessary to aid in affording adequate defence; in such cases they were provided.

"It was found that the above, which is but a sketch of the system, removed a temptation, that unquestionably existed before, for one department to endeavour to throw expenditure on another; while the precise responsibility of naval and military authority was clearly defined."

"The above" is evidently Tryon's ideal of a complete and comprehensive system of national defence for a maritime Power: but it will be observed that he has so sketched the position and the resources of the kingdom of Achill that criticism is to some extent disarmed, as no particular country is represented, but merely the general principles of national defence set forth, with a special emphasis upon the propriety of making full use of existing national resources and the organisation of reliable reserves, which latter at this time was his special business.

CHAPTER XIV.

NATIONAL INSURANCE.

THE subject of National Insurance was one to which Sir George Tryon gave much attention during the years 1889-90. He looked upon it as a question of the very highest importance, and one that should be fully considered during a time of peace, and all preliminary arrangements made, so that there should be no panic on the outbreak of war. He conversed much on the subject with his friends; and he also wrote about it both privately and publicly, and endeavoured to obtain the opinions of leading shipowners and merchants, and of others who had given thought and attention to the subject. He published an article in the 'United Service Magazine' for May 1890, entitled "National Insurance, a Practical Proposal"; and he also wrote a shorter memorandum setting forth his proposal, and distributed a large number of copies amongst all those who were likely to be interested in the subject, including many of his brother officers.

Tryon did not claim originality for his proposal

for a State insurance of merchant-ships in time of war: he acknowledges that the subject was mentioned to him by Admiral Hopkins some years previous to the time that he took it up and pushed it with his characteristic energy and perseverance.

In order to give the reader a clear idea of Tryon's proposal, and the arguments by which he supported it, it will be necessary to quote some passages from the article in the 'United Service Magazine,' and from the memorandum above referred to, although in point of fact the former is an amplification of the latter, with few exceptions. He says:—

"The pressing wants of this nation on the outbreak of a great naval war will force prominently to the front the following points:—

"*1st.* The supply of food, six-tenths of which is at present imported.

"*2d.* The import of raw material.

"*3d.* The export of manufactured goods.

"*4th.* How to protect our trade and commerce under the British flag.

"*5th.* How to maintain our commercial agencies throughout the world.

"*6th.* How to maintain in its integrity the eminent position we have attained, so that it will not permanently suffer from the effects of war.

"If we can safeguard the country on the above points thus briefly referred to, even though the cost might be considerable, it would be as nothing com-

pared to what the loss would be if it cannot be done. Should the object in view be attained, at the end of a war we should be able at once to resume our commercial position; we should have provided during the time the war lasted food for the masses, who are largely dependent on supplies brought from over the seas, and something at all events would have been effected towards enabling them to earn wages with which to buy the necessaries of life.

"In brief, the proposal is (subject to certain regulations and conditions) for the State to guarantee to pay the cost of vessels and cargoes destroyed by the enemy. The charges arising would, to some extent, be recovered indirectly if the market is supplied and trade maintained, for the rates and taxes would be far less than would otherwise be the case. . . .

"It may be asked, Why this new thing? The reply is, The conditions presented in this country are novel, not only among great nations, but new to us since the last great war, and they are such as to demand attention and, if necessary, exceptionally strong and new measures. No nation has at any time been so entirely dependent on the product of other countries as is Great Britain at this time.

"The facts that present themselves when the proposal is considered in its entirety will show that, provided vessels avoid positions that are dangerous owing to geographical conditions, and if other positions are guarded, it will not be so easy as some

think to greatly interfere with trade and commerce carried in reasonably fast vessels. It appears to be essential, however, in the interests of the nation, that the losses incurred by such vessels at the hands of the enemy should be borne by the State. If it is not, the sense of insecurity produced by the loss of a few vessels would be such that the rate of insurance to cover war-risks would become enormously high. For instance, it is clear that the loss of three vessels out of a hundred would send up the rate of insurance on all vessels to a ruinous height; but if the loss of those three vessels was borne by the State, it would be little felt, and indeed it would be more than recouped directly and indirectly by the nation, not only through the cargoes of the other ninety-seven vessels, but by the maintenance of trade and commerce in our hands. At the outset of a war a sense of insecurity causes an appreciation in value much in excess of risks really incurred."

After pointing out that we import eleven million tons of food every year, in addition to an enormous amount of raw material for our manufactures, and that there is not a sufficiency of neutral shipping in the world to supply our wants, and further, that even if our merchant-ships were transferred to neutral flags on the outbreak of war with the hope that they would be able to supply our wants, it is not likely that their neutrality would be acknowledged by the enemy, Tryon proceeds:—

"What is contraband of war is by no means settled. Some nations consider coal is, some con-

sider provisions are, and in case of war nations act first and talk afterwards, and we cannot expect other nations to go to war in support of views as to what is and what is not contraband, save when their own interests are materially affected, and not even always then.

"Supposing our wants are met in the main by our own ships, supplemented by neutral vessels, and the neutral vessels and cargoes are recognised as such, and are consequently not liable to be captured, the profits of the neutrals will be very great, while our vessels running war-risks would be at a serious disadvantage, and the result would be reflected in the loss of trade and commerce, and its departure to other flags. Would it ever return? History holds out no reliable hope on this score.

. . . . . .

"It is of no use saying how wrong and how wicked war is; facts are facts, and we must accept the world in which we live as it is. History tells us war does not necessarily fall on those who have failed to keep international obligations: the ill-will which precedes war may arise from many causes; among others from ambition, from envy, from internal as well as from external causes. History also tells us war is apt to come suddenly, without notice; and those most liable to be assaulted are those who are most open to attack, those who have that to lose and to yield that others envy and want."

Tryon then proceeds to amplify and illustrate his argument for State insurance, though he sees clearly

the direction from which he may expect opposition to the scheme, and endeavours to forestall the arguments of his assumed opponents. Thus:—

"I am aware there are objections entertained to interference at any time by the State in commercial matters: no doubt the most enterprising feel themselves equal to any occasion, and only watch opportunities; but surely this may be carried too far. No one can speak with practical experience upon the whole question: it has never been put to the test. The conditions are new; they are the result of energy, enterprise, industry, and prosperity, and of a long-protracted peace, only checkered by wars that have not disadvantageously affected our mercantile marine.

"I have tried to refer to national requirements only, and have avoided obscuring the question with masses of figures. The proposal is distinctly not in the interest of any particular section of the community: it has for its object solely the safeguarding of the interests of the nation at large. Shipowners, and merchants, and traders, who would not be affected under any conditions of State insurance, will naturally not regard it with favour. It may be said with much truth that any scheme of national insurance effected under any conditions of rules would be inequitable. With this I have nothing to do: besides, inequitable to whom? To the owners who are not insured. The real point is, would it be effective, would it do what is required, would it be not in the interest of individuals but of the nation,

would it serve to tide over a space and secure for the country what it requires till energy and enterprise have had time to develop new methods? It is quite possible by-and-by so many fast ships would spring into existence that a system of State insurance would no longer be required.

. . . . . .

"I have only indicated in this paper what it appears to me is required; the proposal made is set forth suggestively, the particular plan may possibly be shown to be full of economic fallacies, and a far better system may be suggested. I care not for the plan, I only want the result. I, for one, am not content to sit down and accept the statements I have been compelled to read. I do not believe them, nor will I give them the assent that might be assumed if they are only met by silence."[1]

Tryon's proposal gave rise to an immense amount of discussion. Not only the leading London daily papers, and all the naval and military journals, but the provincial papers also, took it up and discussed it. The 'Times' was decidedly unfavourable to the proposal, and in a leading article on the 5th September 1890 it states the case from an opposite point of view in the following emphatic terms: "It is no part of the duty of the State to interfere with the internal distribution of loss and gain. That is

[1] The statements to which he alludes seem to be those made in some quarters about this period, to the effect that we should not be able in any circumstances to protect our trade under our own flag in case of war with a maritime Power, and that it would therefore naturally pass to the flag of neutrals who would still supply our wants.

very much better managed by economical forces, interference with which is mischievous when it ceases to be merely futile. But it is most distinctly and emphatically the duty of the State to use every effort to prevent the destruction of capital by the enemy. When a ship is destroyed, it is in the first instance an individual loss, but that must not blind us to the fact that it is also a reduction from the national resources. It is a dead loss to the country as well as to the individual, and it remains a dead loss, no matter to what account it is debited. It is the function of the navy to prevent that loss, whether by wholesale attacks upon our shores or by detailed depredations among our merchant-ships. This is the lesson which it seems so hard to drive into the heads of an easy-going British public, and such schemes as Sir George Tryon's unfortunately tend to increase the difficulty of the task. If our corn-supply is interrupted, what possible good does the nation reap from paying for the lost ships out of the taxes? If it were seriously interrupted, it would hardly matter though the cost of the ships were ultimately recoverable from those who destroyed them. We should be vanquished all the same, and deposed from the position we now occupy. There is one national duty in this connection, and one only, that is worth insisting upon for a moment. That duty is to render it impossible for any enemy or combination of enemies to interrupt our supplies of food and whatever else is necessary for our well-being. Every proposal, however well meant, that

tends, in ever so small a degree, to obscure this duty, or to substitute for it illusory precautions against cureless evil, must be regarded with the greatest suspicion. If, in the time of trouble, this nation can adequately protect its commerce, and keep open highways for British shipping carrying on its multifarious duties, the empire will stand. If the nation fails to do this, the empire will fall."

Thus thundered the 'Times,' and the majority of the smaller fry took up the same cry. Many of Sir George Tryon's brother officers wrote against the scheme, amongst them Lord Charles Beresford. The leading idea of those who opposed the proposition seems to have been that the politicians and political economists of a certain school would grasp at something of this kind, or indeed at anything which seemed likely to afford a plausible excuse for not keeping the navy up to an efficient strength, and make use of it as an argument for keeping down the Naval Estimates. But it is certain that Tryon had no such idea in his mind when he put forth his proposition. He answered the 'Times'' leading article in a letter to that paper on the 19th September 1890, and pointed out that he had said nothing about the adequacy or inadequacy of the navy, but merely that on the outbreak of war (whatever condition our navy might be in) there would be an immense rise in the insurance of British ships, far beyond the actual risks run, and that this would drive them off the ocean if the State did not interfere in their favour by guaran-

teeing them against loss by the act of the enemy; and he also pointed out that very probably such State insurance need only be temporary until enough fast ships had been built to run the food cargoes, or until the question had adjusted itself to circumstances. In fact, his proposition was specially intended to arrest panic amongst shipowners on the outbreak of a war.

But shipowners and merchants did not appear to fall in with the idea, as indeed he foresaw.

Tryon was only anxious for the fullest discussion on the subject by all who had any interest in the matter, and invited any one to criticise his proposition freely, either privately or publicly. He received many answers, but few of them were favourable to his scheme.

It will not be necessary to quote more than one or two of the replies, as there is a strong family likeness amongst them all.

Sir Thomas Sutherland, the chairman of the P. & O. Company, says:—

"During the Russian war-scarce in 1885 we had much casual discussion on the problem of which your paper treats, and it was often suggested that, when once face to face with war, the only way to ensure our food-supply would be for the Government to pay for the loss of any vessels captured. But while the discussion was going on, the danger passed away.

"I confess I can hardly conceive that any Government will be prevailed upon to commit itself to a

policy of this kind in time of peace. On the other hand, every Government ought to discuss the matter in peace-time, so as to be prepared in emergency to act if necessary. This would be quite a different thing from formulating a scheme and bringing a bill before Parliament. In time of war-pressure the powers of the executive Government would be enormous, and the Queen could, by proclamation, offer almost any terms to secure supplies for the nation.

"As to the necessity of some such measure, no one can speak with any certainty. The insurance war-risk might be comparatively moderate or enormous: that would depend, of course, on the danger to be apprehended. It is certain that prices would adjust themselves to the cost of meeting the risk. It is clear that our facilities for securing supplies by sailing-vessels and slow steamers would be greatly diminished, and therefore a very heavy advance in the cost of the necessaries of life would be one of the results of war breaking out. Could, then, the Government lessen the blow which this would inflict on the nation by any preconceived arrangement under which shipowners would be indemnified for the loss of their vessels, and merchants for the loss of their goods on the high seas? I confess I doubt whether high prices and scarcity could be averted by any such arrangement. If the danger of putting to sea should not be extreme, merchants and shipowners would come to the front, and they would recoup themselves for their war-risk by the extra prices they would obtain. But if the danger of

capture were excessive, then the mere fact of the Government paying for the ships captured would not diminish famine prices to any sensible extent, though as a *dernier ressort* such a policy might be necessary to avert starvation."

Mr A. B. Forwood (now Sir Arthur Forwood), a Liverpool shipowner and merchant, and Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty under the last Conservative Government, wrote as follows with reference to Sir George Tryon's proposal:—

"As a shipowner and merchant I strongly advocate the State interfering as little as possible in mercantile transactions during the time of war, except affording the utmost protection by cruisers. State insurance, which must proceed on hard-and-fast rules, would work inequitably, and be a bar rather than an incentive to mercantile enterprise. It would place the man of least resource on a par with the trader who would exercise judgment and thought. Sir George Tryon in his paper gives regulations under which guarantee of safety would be accorded, showing that he recognises this element of differential risk, but it is impossible to even approximately classify the risks on general and broad lines. Every voyage and ship, its master and equipment, must be judged on its merits, and this can only be done by the experienced underwriter; and thus the best ship and the least risky voyage will pay the lowest premium.

"If there was a State guarantee, the cargo from the most distant and most risky route would be on

the same footing as the one imported from the nearer and safer port. If the shipowner and merchant are guaranteed, the motive for using precaution, which the underwriter could inculcate by means of his rate of premium, would be removed. Again, prices must advance of imported articles in time of war in the English market, with a corresponding fall abroad,—why should this gain be given to the merchant at the cost of the State? It would be a very one-sided bargain.

"I had experience in shipping to the Southern States during their war. The insurance charged was 20 per cent for some time. Business adjusted itself at once; ships were specially built, and particular masters obtained a repute which led to a great difference in rates of insurance. The merchant bought his cotton at from 2d. to 4d., and if he got through the blockade he realised 2s. If there had been a State guarantee, very probably more vessels would have run the risk for the very safe profit, and the difference in price might have been reduced; but the profit, whatever it was, would have gone to the individual at the cost of the State.

"The motive of Sir George Tryon is excellent—viz., to retain our trade and ships—but it would only have a partial effect, giving a bonus to a few ships, and leaving two-thirds or three-fourths of our tonnage out in the cold to seek other flags. These slower ships would be more seriously handicapped by such a scheme than by leaving all to their own resources. For example, if the State guaranteed

the 12-knot ship, you save the owner, say, 10 per cent on the value. The same guarantee is refused to the 10-knot ship, who, if he retains the British flag, must pay out of his pocket 15 per cent: thus you at once place the slow boat as a means of transit at a disadvantage of 15 per cent instead of only 5 per cent; and you do one of the two things—raise the best ship's freight excessively, besides presenting him with a practical money bonus of 10 per cent, or drive the slower coach to a foreign flag. I could carry my argument very much further, but the whole points to one conclusion, and one only. Freedom from State interference in trade during war is even of more importance than in time of peace."

It has been already said that Tryon courted the fullest criticism of his proposal, and amongst others he applied to an old friend and brother officer who had business connections in the City of London, Admiral A. J. Chatfield (retired); and the following memorandum was drawn up by the latter, after consultation (as he says) with some of the cleverest of the marine insurers in the City:—

"The proposal of Sir George Tryon seems to be economically unsound, inequitable, and impracticable. Economically unsound, because it is protection, in the form of a bounty upon ships and their cargoes. For the sake of argument let it be admitted that the nation would be willing to take the retrograde step suggested, it would certainly not saddle itself with the entire loss. If a fund had to be created (as proposed), by an *ad valorem* duty on

ships and their cargoes, it could not be levied equitably. It is granted that high-valued, full-powered steamers would run the least risk of being captured; yet they, with their valuable cargoes, would have to contribute a very large proportion to the fund, for the benefit of the low-powered second-class steamers, which would thus be unduly favoured. In fact, the advantage thus gained would probably act as a premium for the construction of this latter class of steamer.

"It is impracticable. Granted that the values of the steamers might be registered beforehand, some check on the values would be necessary, and an army of official surveyors would be required. It would not, however, be possible to register cargoes beforehand, and invoices would be a fallacious test, and could be freely salted. A second army of special experts would be required to check and agree values. Such work as this could not be coped with by any Government department successfully. Objections might be multiplied; and missing vessels in time of war would have to be paid for, unless the enemy would agree to keep an exact record of all the vessels destroyed."

And here is another opinion from the City:—

"The idea is a good one from a shipowner's point of view, and the difficulties in the way might possibly be got over. Such a plan would be almost a necessity for a shipowning company, as they could not afford to run the chances of war-risks and the war insurance. We do not, however, think it clear that

the adoption of this plan would effect all that is claimed for it. Numbers of vessels would be lost, and insurance money is not food. There are also many places where in time of war it would be impossible to run ships, so that trade would be much restrained.

"It would no doubt prevent numbers of ships from being laid up or changing their flags."

And here is yet another shipowner's opinion, that of Thomas H. Ismay, Esq., of the "White Star" Line :—

"I have carefully read the paper which you have been good enough to send me, and upon which you invite criticisms and suggestions from me. There really seems to be nothing left for me to suggest, so fully do your proposals cover the ground.

"It cannot be doubted that very widespread ignorance prevails in this country as to the protection that would be afforded by the neutral flag in the event of our becoming involved in war.

"If, as Captain Hall has well remarked, commerce can be efficiently protected by the neutral flag, we only require sufficient cruisers as vedettes to our squadrons. But I fear the neutral flag at best would secure only scant protection, and for this reason I am of opinion that your scheme is an extremely valuable one, tending, as it must, to inspire confidence among the class of shipowners whose steamers would form practically the only means of securing supplies and maintaining our commerce during time of war."

The reader who has taken sufficient interest in the subject to follow the discussion will no doubt have observed that many of the objections offered to Tryon's proposal deal with details, and do not grapple with the main point. Tryon's main point is, that the people will starve if they cannot get food; and also that large numbers of the working classes, who are dependent for work and wages on the importation of foreign raw material, will starve if they cannot get work and wages; and his proposition appears to be intended as a measure to tide over the period of the first great pressure, or dislocation of the ordinary course of trade, which might be expected to take place on the sudden outbreak of war with a maritime Power. He says distinctly that he believes matters will adjust themselves after a time, in accordance with the economic conditions of the case; and he simply wishes to make such arrangements as will prevent a panic during the first few months of a war. He evidently does not think that it matters much whether a State guarantee would prove to be strictly equitable as between the merchants, or partially inequitable; nor whether some shipowners and merchants made fortunes, and others made nothing, or lost what they had got. He wished to institute such a scheme of State guarantee as would avert a national collapse through famine, and the conclusion of an ignominious peace through internal dissensions caused by such a rise in the price of food as to produce universal distress in these islands, and thus paralyse the arm of

the executive Government of the day. He wished to see the principle admitted that it is the duty of the State to interfere in such a case, and—under the absolutely unique conditions of Great Britain—save the country from the horrors of starvation, until the commercial question had time to settle itself, and our navy had either gained a practical command of the sea or lost it.

It may of course be said that the whole subject is one of details, and nothing but details. Possibly it may be so. It is at any rate a very interesting question. The leading arguments on both sides have been put before the reader, and he can form his own conclusions thereon. The present writer offers no opinion on the merits of the case. It is a case in which one may perhaps be forgiven for riding on a rail, in readiness to drop off on whichever side seems most like to be the right one when the time comes,—an operation usually known as reserving judgment, or keeping an open mind on the subject.

Perhaps time may show whether Sir George Tryon was right or wrong.

Malta Harbour.

CHAPTER XV.

MEDITERRANEAN COMMAND.

In August 1891 Sir George Tryon was appointed to succeed Admiral Sir Anthony Hoskins in command of her Majesty's ships and vessels on the Mediterranean station. He left England in the Nile battleship on the 11th of September, and arrived at Gibraltar on the 15th, where he met Sir Anthony in the Victoria, with the first division of the Mediterranean fleet, and Sir George assumed command on the 21st, Sir Anthony going to Genoa (for England) in the Surprise.

The first division, under the new Commander-in-Chief, visited Port Mahon, Madelena, Naples, Malta (a flying visit), Nauplia, and Milo; and at the last place, on the 22d of October, the second division of the squadron under the rear-admiral, Lord Walter Kerr, joined the first division, and the two divisions cruised together and exercised at steam tactics until November, when Sir George with his division sailed for Malta, where they wintered, the second division remaining in the Levant.

The post of Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean is the most important sea-going command which a British admiral can hold. Occasionally one of the other commands—such as North America from 1861 to 1864, or China during one of the wars—assumes a temporary importance and interest which diverts attention from the Mediterranean, but it is only temporary: and it has long been recognised by the highest political and naval authorities that the British Mediterranean fleet ought to be the most powerful sea-going fleet in the world. Our interests there are so great that we cannot afford to be driven out of it, even for a time, as we were towards the close of the last century. Most of the greatest naval battles of the world have been fought in the Mediterranean, and the fate of nations decided thereby. Even before the Suez Canel was cut, and our Eastern trade had assumed the immense importance which it has lately done, our forefathers recognised that a nation which aspired to be a leader in trade and commerce must hold the

ENTRANCE TO MALTA HARBOUR.

Mediterranean in force, and be ready to defend her interests in that sea whenever it came to fighting.

Once or twice during the present century our naval forces in the Mediterranean have been allowed to fall below their proper strength, as compared with those of other Powers; and whenever this has been the case, our position as one of the Great Powers of Europe has been in jeopardy. It only happens when the disciples of false economy and the "Little Englanders," as they are called, get the upper hand in the councils of the nation; or some wild hallucinations regarding the millennium of universal peace take temporary possession of the minds of the majority in Great Britain, thus threatening the existence of the empire.

Happily these aberrations have not been frequent; and thus it is the case that the British Mediterranean fleet has usually been the most powerful sea-going squadron in commission belonging to any nation in any part of the world. The Mediterranean, moreover, is our great nautical drill-ground. Even in the old sailing days it was so regarded; and our crack sailing-frigates and our smartest line-of-battle ships drilled and exercised against each other, and tried rate of sailing in its waters, just as our heavily armoured monsters manœuvre at steam tactics, and carry out other fleet exercises to-day.

The opportunities for drills and exercises are better in the Mediterranean than they are in the

Channel squadron, which is the only other squadron of British battleships in commission. The weather is on the whole finer and drier. The crews of the ships do not get so much on shore, nor are there so many changes as there are in the Channel squadron; thus commanding officers have a better chance of getting their ships "in good order," as the expression goes. And without the smallest reproach to the ships in home waters, it is generally admitted that the Mediterranean squadron is our smartest and best drilled—in fact, our typical squadron of exercise. Nowhere else, except for a week or two during the autumnal manœuvres, is it possible to get ten or a dozen battleships together in one fleet for tactical exercises; and it is only in the Mediterranean, when the first and second divisions combine for exercise, that fleet tactics on a large and comprehensive scale can be satisfactorily carried out, and the evolutions of the signal-book properly and fully developed.

There is, and always has been, a friendly rivalry between the Channel and Mediterranean squadrons, so far as the term rivalry can be applied to two squadrons of exercise which seldom meet. The Channel people by no means admit any superiority in the smartness, cleanliness, or "finish" of the Mediterranean ships or their crews, but rather affect to look down upon them as "fair-weather sailors"; and this term, especially in the days of masts and sails, was regarded as a severe and withering reproach. But, on the other hand, the

Mediterranean people have a crushing retort in the words "not quite up to Mediterranean form," which is usually applied to some newly commissioned ship, or perhaps some ship recently joined from the Channel squadron, which has not yet acquired a certain arbitrary standard of polish and finish supposed to represent "Mediterranean form." But this kind of rivalry, this assumption of superiority, —"swagger," as it has been sometimes irreverently called,—is a moral force of the highest value, and works almost entirely for good. The crew of a ship, or the crews of a squadron, which has acquired a name for special smartness, or for extra cleanliness and finish, are invariably better behaved, and generally more ready for any emergency, than men who have been allowed to fall below par in these respects. Thus wise commanding officers cultivate this sentiment, and turn it to very practical use.

The maintenance of a powerful British Mediterranean squadron is said to be a cause of jealousy and apprehension to some of our neighbours; but so is almost everything else we do outside our own borders, so that it becomes impossible to guide our policy in accordance with an over-sensitive regard for what may cause jealousy or disapproval among our nautical rivals.

"Do you bite your thumb at me, sir? I bite my thumb, sir."

We do not bite our thumbs at anybody in particular by keeping a powerful fleet in the Mediterranean, where our commercial and political interests

are so great; and if others choose to regard it as a menace, that is not our fault. We cannot abandon our traditional naval policy without resigning our position as one of the Great Powers, and earning the contempt instead of the jealousy of all our neighbours. It is our commercial success, and our immense mercantile fleet, which are the real causes of jealousy and envy; and Great Britain is scarcely prepared to abandon these without a struggle.

The selection for the appointment of naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean must always be an anxious responsibility for the Minister to whom it is intrusted. It is not too much to say that (even in spite of the telegraph) the peace of Europe not infrequently depends upon the tact, discretion, and sound judgment of the admiral in command of the British Mediterranean fleet; and thus our naval records show that one of our ablest and most distinguished admirals of the day is always to be found with his flag flying in those waters.

Not many years ago we kept only one sea-going admiral in the Mediterranean, and an admiral in the dockyard at Malta, who occasionally hoisted his flag and went to sea; but latterly the squadron has been so much increased that it has been considered necessary to keep two sea-going admirals there in addition to the dockyard admiral.

When Sir George Tryon relieved Sir Anthony Hoskins in command of the station the rear-admiral

was Lord Walter Kerr, and the admiral in charge of Malta dockyard Admiral Buller. These were relieved not long afterwards, respectively, by Admiral Markham and Admiral Tracey.

Notwithstanding that Malta is by far our largest and most important dockyard out of England, it has been found to be unequal to our present requirements, and as it is not possible to effect any considerable extension of it, our responsible statesmen have wisely decided to build docks at Gibraltar, which does not look as if there was any serious intention of reversing our traditional naval policy of keeping a powerful fleet in the Mediterranean—though, strange to say, we have quite lately seen grave propositions made for the complete abandonment of that sea by the British fleet. Egypt to be handed over to the French, Malta to the Pope, and Cyprus returned to the Turks. And, stranger still, these propositions have been made not by foreigners but by Englishmen, and one an English soldier!

Tryon was certainly not an advocate of this policy, or "strategy," as it has been humorously called. The so-called policy of "scuttle" did not commend itself to his judgment. He saw no reason for backing down on every possible occasion, for fear of hurting somebody's over-sensitive feelings. His views on this subject have been quoted in an earlier chapter,[1] and need not be repeated; but he certainly held strong opinions as to the importance of

[1] Chapter xi.

Great Britain keeping a firm grip on the Mediterranean, and being ready to hold her own against any probable combination of enemies; and during the period that he held command of the station he devoted all his time, his abundant energy, his great powers of organisation, and his personal influence as a leader, towards making the most of the material at his disposal, and moulding his squadron into a fighting machine which should be second to none.

He was always most anxious to keep himself thoroughly well informed upon all subjects of interest, which could be of any use to him, from every part of his extensive command; and with this object in view he addressed the following letter to all captains and officers in command of ships, shortly after he arrived on the station:—

"DEAR CAPTAIN ——,—Officers in command of H.M. ships, and especially those on detached service, not infrequently become acquainted with matters of interest of a nature which do not usually form the subject of official correspondence.

"I shall be very glad to receive informal letters from you at any time you desire to draw my attention to any points of interest, as I am very anxious to keep thoroughly acquainted with everything that may affect the conduct of affairs on the station."

This letter made all commanding officers—even

the commander of the smallest gun-vessel—feel that they were in the confidence of the Commander-in-Chief; and that they were encouraged to seek useful information by every legitimate means, and impart it to the Admiral for the good of the public service: and there can be no doubt that they felt their own importance considerably increased by this invitation to communicate informally and confidentially with the Commander-in-Chief. This exhibition of friendly confidence—without a shadow of undue familiarity—which he was in the habit of showing to those serving under his orders was one of the secrets of Sir George Tryon's power and authority, and was one of the main causes of that remarkable devotion with which he was served.

Unfortunately some of our naval worthies have attained distinction by a different line of conduct; and have thought to add to their dignity and importance by assuming the position of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, to whom all men were called upon to bow down and worship, either with or without music. But this was not the view that Tryon took of his position as a naval commander. He rather sought to associate himself with his officers, and to make them feel that they all belonged to the same company, the members of which were to seek their highest honour, and to endeavour to attain the summit of their loftiest ambition, by devoting themselves heart and soul to the best interests of the service; and he set them the example of doing

so. He assumed the position of managing director of the company for the time being, and was ready at all times to consult, to advise, and to lead. No detail was too small for his notice; nor was anything too much trouble for him, so long as it was likely to increase in the smallest degree the efficiency of any branch of the public service, or to further the legitimate ambition or individual interests of anybody serving under his orders.

He was in the truest sense of the word a leader, and, as became a leader, eminently just and impartial.

His views on this subject were curtly expressed in a speech which he delivered on board the mercantile training-ship Conway at Liverpool, where he went to give away the prizes, just before he left England to take command of the Mediterranean station. He said (towards the close of a humorous and interesting speech): "Do right and fear not. As officers, while just, and while firm, be considerate to those under you, and seek to lead rather than to command."

This was the key-note of his own conduct; and his tact, his judgment, his mother wit, and the transparent honesty and public spirit of his motives, enabled him to assume quite naturally the position of a leader, without in the smallest degree compromising his position as a commander. On the contrary, his kind consideration for those serving under his orders enhanced the respect in which he was universally held; the result being that he was

served with a devotion and implicit obedience rare even amongst sailors.

The disaster to the Howe[1] occurred during the time that Sir George Tryon was in command of the Mediterranean station; and although she did not belong to his squadron, he took it very much to heart as a national calamity, and his private and semi-official letters show how deep an interest he took in the matter, and how anxious he was that she should be saved at all costs for the honour of the country.

It was in consequence of this accident to the Howe that he issued the following Memorandum to his own squadron—a Memorandum which has acquired a peculiar significance and interest in the light of subsequent events:—

"MEMORANDUM.

"'It may frequently happen that an order may be given to an officer, which, from circumstances not known to the person who gave it at the time he issued it, would be impossible to execute, or the difficulty or risk of the execution of it would be so great as to amount to a moral impossibility.—Duke of Wellington's G.O., 11th November 1803.'

"1. While an order should be implicitly obeyed,

[1] The Howe, a first-class battleship belonging to the Channel squadron, grounded on the rocks going into Ferrol harbour; several compartments were filled, and she remained on the rocks for nearly five months, but was finally floated off, taken home, and repaired.

still circumstances may change, and conditions may widely vary from those known, or even from those that presented themselves at the time orders were issued. In such cases the officer receiving orders, guided by the object that he knows his chief has in view, must act on his own responsibility.

"2 (*a*). Orders directing the movement of ships, either collectively or singly, are invariably accompanied, as a matter of course, with the paramount understood condition—'With due regard to the safety of H.M. ships.'

"(*b*) When the literal obedience to any order, however given, would entail a collision with a friend, or endanger a ship by running on shore, or in any other way, paramount orders direct that the danger is to be avoided, while the object of the order should be attained if possible.

"3. An admiral leading a fleet relies with confidence that while the order of the fleet is maintained, each ship will be handled and piloted with all the care and attention that is exercised in the guidance of the leading ship. He relies that this will be the case, more especially when a fleet is approaching land or a harbour. When a tide or a current is experienced, it is clear that a following ship cannot be safely conducted by eye-steering after a leader; rear ships are liable to be swept by currents to one side or the other off the safe track, and the farther they are off a leader of a column, the farther they are likely to be from the true track.

"4. Risks that are not only justifiable, but are demanded during war, are not justifiable during peace.

"*Manœuvring.*

"5. Ships following a leader in column should, when manœuvring, avoid turning on a greater arc than that of the leader; if there is any error or difference it should be due to turning on a smaller arc.

"6. As a rule, when a ship has turned wide on a leader, following ships should turn on the guide of their column, and not on the ship that has got out of station and has to recover it.

"7. When in line ahead any error from the exact station of a ship should be in the direction of being ahead of station; but when in line abreast any error should be in the direction of being astern of station rather than ahead of it.

"8. The neighbourly duties of ships in a fleet to each other are duties which must be kept constantly in mind.

"G. TRYON,
Vice-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief."

It was while he was in command of the Mediterranean squadron that Sir George Tryon instituted, and frequently practised, his system of manœuvres without signals, commonly known as the "T A" system. The subject is of a somewhat technical nature, and it is proposed to deal with it separately in the next chapter.

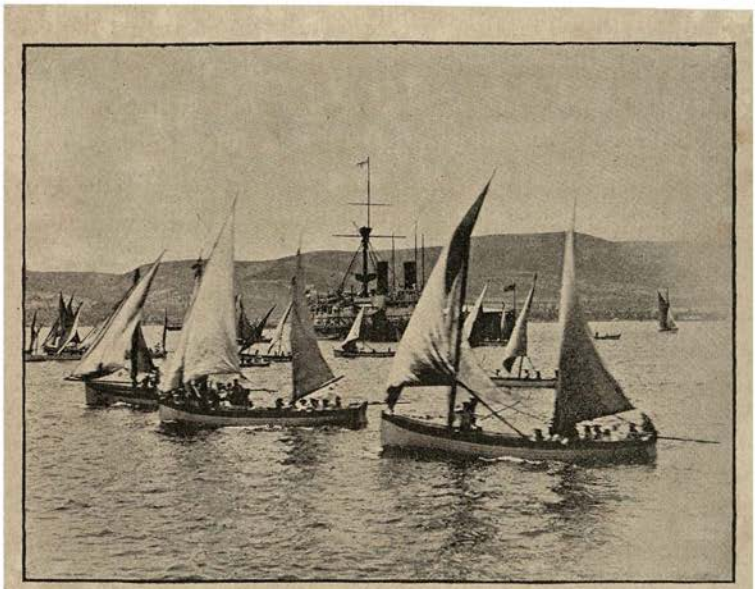
Just before the two divisions of the fleet separated for the winter of 1891-92 the annual regatta took place.

These annual fleet regattas in the Mediterranean are looked forward to by both officers and men with the keenest interest; and the preparations for the two great events—viz., the rowing race for the Duke of Edinburgh's Challenge Cup, and the sailing race for the Commander-in-Chief's Cup—are carried on for months before the time. The regatta usually takes place late in the autumn, either in October or early in November, just before the separation of the two divisions; and the Admiral always endeavours to bring as many ships together as possible.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Challenge Cup was presented by his Royal Highness when he was Commander-in-Chief of the station, for the best 12-oared service cutter, to be rowed over a straight course of three miles; and the boat winning it is the champion cutter for the year. It is a proud moment for a ship's company when this coveted trophy comes on board and takes its place in a glass case under the charge of the sentry at the captain's cabin door—the name of the ship winning it, with the date, being duly inscribed upon it. Everybody in the ship feels as if he had had something to do with winning it. This is essentially the men's trophy; but the Admiral's Cup for the sailing race is the officers' trophy, and becomes the absolute property of the officer winning it. The cup race for 1891 took place at Suda Bay,

in the island of Candia. Sir George Tryon presented a very handsome silver cup; and after a splendid race, in which more than sixty boats took part, it was won by Lieutenant Evan Thomas of H.M.S. Victoria, in one of that ship's cutters.

The annual presentation of a cup by the admiral in command of a squadron, to be sailed for with any



Start of Cutters and Gigs.

rig, and in any class of *bonâ fide* service boats, was instituted by the late Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby for the encouragement of boat-sailing in 1872, when he commanded the Channel squadron; and his generous example has been so largely followed by other admirals on most of our principal stations, that "the race for the Admiral's Cup" has come

to be looked upon as the great boat-sailing event of the year, as firmly established as the race for the Derby stakes.

It is impossible to overrate the good which this encouragement to boat-sailing has effected. Coming just at the time when masts and sails were being abolished in all our fighting-ships, it was particularly opportune, and helped to save boat-sailing from a rapid extinction.

In the old days boat-sailing took care of itself, as most of the work of the ship was carried on in sailing-boats; but as steamboats were gradually introduced into the navy, until all large ships carried two or three, and even the smallest gun-vessel carried one, the use of sailing-boats was steadily declining, and it appeared as if the art would soon be lost. This would have been regrettable, as it is a fine school for the midshipmen, and for making young seamen handy and alert. The artificial encouragement and the impetus given to boat-sailing by the institution of these interesting cup regattas was therefore most opportune and very effective. Sir George Tryon fully appreciated it as a training-school; and being himself a good boat-sailer, he took a special interest in it, and gave it every encouragement.

Shortly after the race for the Admiral's Cup at Suda Bay the Victoria and the first division of the fleet went to Malta for the winter.

The winter at Malta is a gay season, and the naval Commander-in-Chief, who is provided by

the Admiralty with a house, is expected to entertain largely; and he is—next to the Governor—the most important person in the island. Lady Tryon came out from England for the winter, and under her able and graceful guidance the hospitalities of Admiralty House were dispensed in a manner worthy of its best traditions. The Tryons succeeded an admiral who was noted for his hospitality, and who had by far the best cook in the island; so that they had a great reputation to keep up.

The principal houses in Malta are the old palaces of the Knights of St John; the residence of the Governor being the magnificent palace of the Grand Masters. The admiral's house in the Strada Mezzodi is one of these, but it is one of the smallest of the *auberges*, and the Tryons felt greatly the inadequate size of their rooms, in view of all the people they wished to entertain; but in spite of this drawback, the Admiralty House balls and dinner-parties were about the most popular in Malta during the winters of 1891-92 and 1892-93. Tryon loved hospitality, and he was never more happy than when he saw his rooms full, and his guests—particularly the young ones—enjoying themselves.

The office-work of the Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean is very heavy, especially at Malta during the winter months; and on some days, when there is a run of work—more particularly on mail-days—he is tied to his office

until very late hours, and can scarcely find time to take necessary exercise. Fortunately Sir George Tryon was fond of writing, and he kept up a very large private and semi-official correspondence in addition to his official work. Allusion has already been made to his invitation to all his captains, and to all officers in command of ships, to communicate to him any interesting information from any part of the station. This correspondence of course entailed answers from him, which could not be deputed to his secretary or clerks. He wrote very fast, and, as has been previously remarked, his writing was often difficult to read.

Besides his thirst for information from all quarters of his own station, he was in close and frequent communication with the Director of Naval Intelligence at the Admiralty (Rear-Admiral Bridge). This correspondence is very interesting, but unfortunately it is generally of too confidential a nature for publication: it was of course reciprocal—that is to say, he was in a position to impart as much information to the Admiralty as he received therefrom.

In one of his letters to Admiral Bridge he mentions a visit which he had paid to Madalena, the Italian military port at the northern end of the island of Sardinia. He visited, amongst other things, the columbary, or pigeon establishment. It seems that the Italians were training carrier-pigeons for war purposes; but they suffered great losses from hawks, with which the island of Sardinia

abounds. Out of sixty pigeons that were started from Cagliari only about a dozen got to Madalena; so the Italians attached a light sort of bamboo whistles to their tails, which, as Tryon says, "made a surprising noise when they flew," and it was hoped this would frighten the hawks. But not a bit of it; the hawks did not mind the whistle in the least—in fact, it saved them a lot of trouble, for instead of going to seek their prey they had nothing to do but to sit on a rock and wait until they heard the whistle announcing that dinner was ready. It was not precisely the same tune as the bo'sun's pipe to dinner, but it answered the same purpose.

In another letter to the Chief of the Intelligence Department, Tryon puts interesting questions in international law which show the direction in which his thoughts were ever running, and as the questions do not disclose any confidential matter they may be quoted. He says:—

"I was looking the other day for some clear definition or exposition on the following points: A. and B. are at war, C. is neutral. Territorial waters extend three miles from the shore. A squadron belonging to A. sights a squadron belonging to B. that is much inferior, and is steaming along the land one mile distant from it. B. desires not to fight; A. desires to go at B.; C. has no force present or near. Where is the law clearly defined? I don't ask what would happen.

"Again, B. desires not to fight, being inferior:

C., the neutral, is present with a force: B. and C. are more than a match for A.: B. desires to go north and east, and it is A.'s object to prevent this. C. says, 'You shall not fight in my waters. I will attack whoever attacks the other first.' B. steams steadily on N.E., along the shore, C. accompanying, to prevent a fight taking place in neutral waters. B., thus escorted, gains his point; gets a certain number of miles N.E., and then one night, unobserved by A., slips away and plays the deuce. What does the law say, and where? And what would be the decision of a Geneva Convention as to ultimate damages?"

As to the first of these cases, it is certainly generally understood that to fight in neutral territorial waters is a breach of international law; and though Tryon seems to have little doubt as to what would really happen, it is not unlikely that the power and ability of the neutral to take ultimate revenge for the breach of his territorial neutrality, as well as the diplomatic relations (an unknown factor) between the neutral and the two belligerents respectively, would be powerful guides as to what would happen.

The second problem is a decided puzzler, as it would obviously be most unfair for C. to act as an escort to B., and afford him safe-conduct through a critical period of a strategic movement which might result in giving him some opportunity of a combination disastrous to A. This would not be neutrality.

The last of the series of this confidential correspondence which passed between Sir George Tryon and Admiral Bridge may be quoted, though it is only interesting because it was probably one of the last letters Sir George ever wrote. It is dated from Haifa on June 16, 1893, and the Victoria foundered on the 22d. He says:—

"I will subscribe £1 to the object in view, expressed in your letter of the 9th. How well Hopkins managed the American business; it was a very useful exhibition of friendship on both sides, with lots of witnesses. I'm paying a hurried visit to the coast of Syria; it does us all a lot of good being together.—Yours sincerely,

"G. TRYON."

This takes us, however, rather ahead of our reckoning, and we must return.

In January 1892 the Victoria ran aground at Snipe Point, near Platea, on the coast of Greece. Sir George Tryon was not on board at the time, the Victoria having gone to Platea in charge of Captain Bourke to carry out her annual submarine mining and other torpedo practice. Platea is a snug little landlocked harbour on a quiet and practically uninhabited spot on the western shores of Greece, and it has—with the permission of the Greek Government—been selected for carrying out this exercise; each of the ships of the Mediterranean fleet going there in turns during the winter

months for the purpose of carrying out a systematic course of torpedo work.

The Victoria at the time of the accident was engaged in the operation known technically as "running 'Whiteheads' under weigh." It is an exercise requiring much caution, as it has to be done in shallow water, in order to afford a better chance of recovering an erratic "Whitehead" which makes a mistake, and sinks instead of floating at the end of its run. The ship herself has to be under weigh and steaming at a good speed; and with heavy battleships in close and narrow waters it is an exercise requiring caution and vigilance.

Captain Bourke knew that Snipe Point—being low, and the shoal-water extending some distance off it—was a dangerous spot; and in order to make matters perfectly safe, he decided to place a temporary buoy on the extreme edge of the shoal-water, so as to be able to manœuvre with freedom so long as he kept outside the buoy. He therefore sent a boat in to the point, with orders to row "straight out," and drop the buoy when she got into 10 fathoms of water. The boat went in and did row "straight out," and dropped the buoy in 10 fathoms; but, unfortunately, she had not rowed straight out on the line of the shoal, which was narrow, so that, although the buoy was in 10 fathoms, the shoal extended considerably beyond the buoy, and the Victoria during one of her runs ran on the rocky shoal at a speed of about 9 knots, and stuck fast. The news was telegraphed to Malta, and Sir George

Tryon started off for Platea in the Surprise, after making the necessary arrangements for sending up the Sampson (dockyard tug) with a powerful steam fire-engine for pumping, and other gear, including wire hawsers, which he thought would be required for getting the Victoria off the shoal. The ship was very badly aground. The momentum with which she had run on shore had forced her high up on the shoal, the forepart of the ship being in 7 feet less water than she was drawing when she went on shore. The bottom was badly ripped by the rocks; three compartments were full of water, and there was 66 feet of water under the stern.

The first thing to do, therefore, was to lay out anchors to seaward, to keep the ship steady where she was, and to prevent her from slewing or driving farther up on to the shoal in case a strong westerly wind should set in before all the arrangements were ready for pulling her off. The Hecla, torpedo-depot ship, was at Platea at the time, and rendered assistance, and also made two unsuccessful attempts to tow the Victoria off; but the latter was too fast ashore to come off without a good deal of lightening. She ran aground on the afternoon of the 29th of January. Sir George Tryon arrived at Platea on the 1st February; and the ship was floated on the evening of the 4th, having been ashore six days and five hours. These were six days of unremitting toil for the officers and ship's company of the Victoria, and the spirit and energy with which they worked called forth the highest praise from the Commander-

in-Chief, and eventually from the Admiralty. As a matter of fact, the ship's company's hammocks were never got down the whole time—in other words, they never went to bed.

The arrangements made by the Admiral for getting the ship off were elaborate, but conceived and carried out in a thoroughly practical and seamanlike manner. First, the ship was lightened by 1253 tons, including 475 tons of coal thrown overboard. Temporary bulkheads and coffer-dams were built inside the ship, for the purpose of confining the water as much as possible, and isolating the leaks, many of which were partially plugged with wooden wedges and Portland cement by the divers.

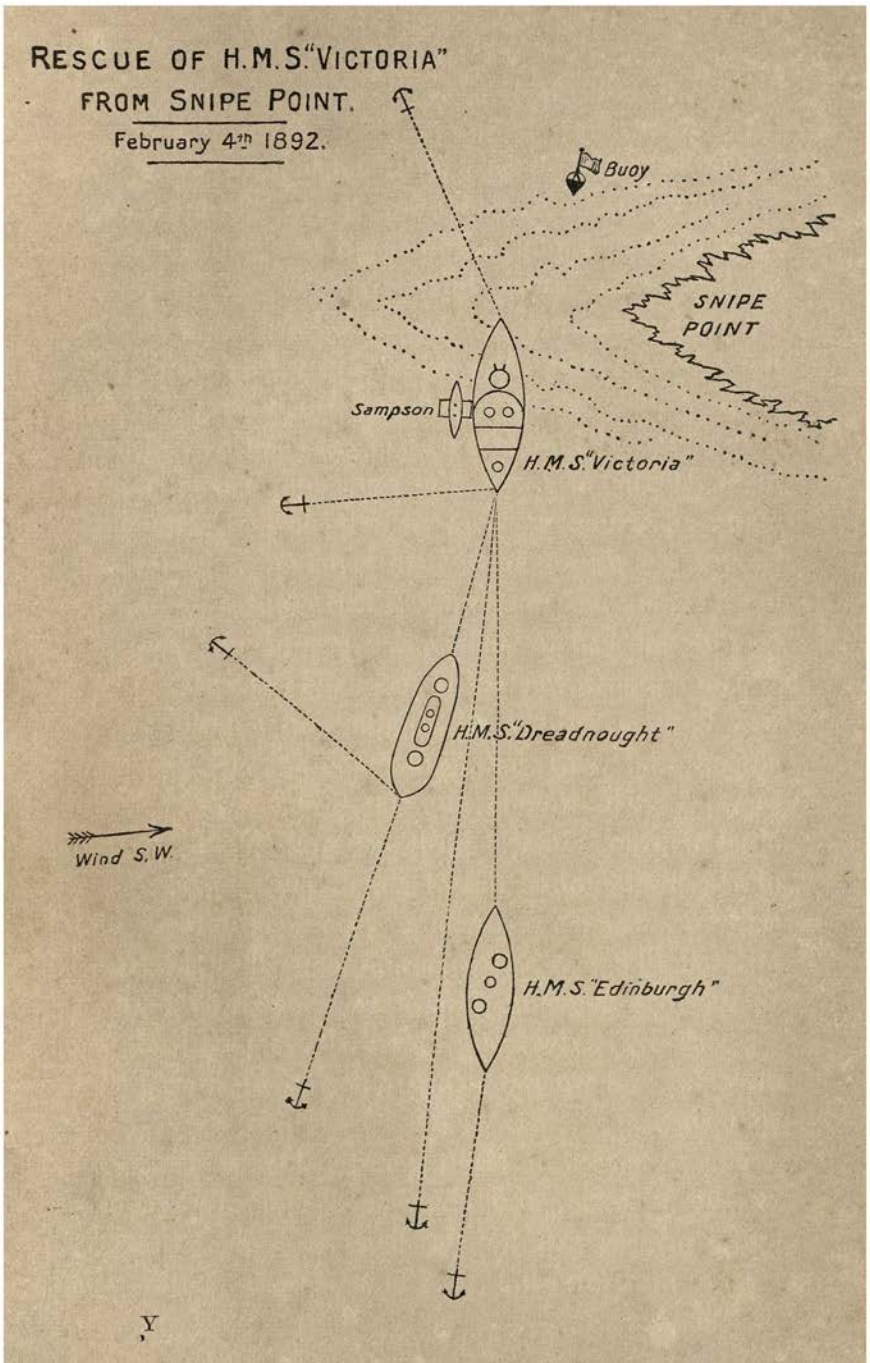
The ships that Sir George Tryon summoned to assist at the operations were the Hecla, Phaeton, Edinburgh, Dreadnought, Scout, with the Humber store-ship and the Sampson tug.

When all was ready, and the necessary anchors had been laid out, the Edinburgh and the Dreadnought pulled astern, and with the Sampson tug lashed alongside, and the Victoria's engines going full speed astern, she came off, to the great delight of all concerned, and the Victoria was saved to the country; but, alas! only for a short time.

Whatever may be said of the grounding of the Victoria, there can only be one opinion as to her rescue, and that is that it was a very fine piece of work, reflecting great credit upon all concerned. The ship returned to Malta, and was docked and repaired in the new Hamilton Dock, which was just com-

RESCUE OF H.M.S. "VICTORIA" FROM SNIPE POINT.

February 4th 1892.



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pleted in time to receive her—in fact, she opened the dock.

The brightest feature of the mishap was the splendid spirit shown by the crew of the Victoria: even the sick turned out and insisted on taking a share of the work so far as they were able. There was no thought of rest, or of "watch below," or of regular meal hours; but all worked away day and night with untiring energy and zeal until they got the ship afloat. There is a sort of satisfaction in knowing that this was not the same ship's company so many of whom were eventually lost in the ship, though the latter showed the same spirit under still more trying circumstances. The mantle of honour was bequeathed to their very worthy successors.

The Victoria was badly damaged; the stem-piece was broken, and the keel-plates and garbords were ripped and torn for a distance of 70 feet from forward. The wonderfully tough nature of the mild steel of which she was built was well shown by some of the pieces taken out of the damaged part of her bottom: there were some pieces crumpled and twisted like the letter S, and some like the letter Z, without showing a fracture. She was built at Elswick by Armstrong, Mitchell, & Co., and the material and workmanship reflected high credit on that firm.

The resources of Malta dockyard were turned on to the Victoria, and she was completely repaired and ready to sail for the summer cruise in May.

The first division of the squadron under the

Commander-in-Chief sailed from Malta on the 31st of May and went to Nauplia, where they were joined by the second division under Rear-Admiral Markham, and the whole fleet cruised and exercised together in the Ægean Sea.

In June the Commander-in-Chief paid a visit to the Sultan at Constantinople; but as armed warships are not allowed to pass through the Dardanelles in peace-time, he could not go in his flagship, and therefore went in his steam-yacht, the Surprise. With his usual thoughtfulness he took with him as his guests Captain Wilson of the Sans Pareil, Captain Noel of the Nile, and his own flag-captain Captain Bourke, in order to give them an opportunity of seeing the famous city of the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. The Admiral and the three captains attended the Salaamlik on the day of their arrival at Constantinople, and were very graciously received by the Sultan: they dined with him, and the Admiral had two interviews with him. They were also shown the forts on the Bosphorus, and had a friendly and agreeable visit, the Sultan bestowing upon Sir George Tryon the Medjidie of the 1st class. They rejoined the fleet on the 25th of June at Vourlah Bay.

The two divisions separated in July, the second division remaining in the Levant; and the first division, after paying a flying visit to Malta, went for a cruise round the coast of Sicily. Mount Etna was at this time in violent eruption, and it

was a splendid sight as the squadron steamed by beneath its towering height, volumes of black smoke darkening the sky and the slopes of the mountain for many miles; and there were constant rumblings, and occasional loud reports as of heavy guns.

The first division with the Commander-in-Chief then cruised until the end of September, visiting the principal Italian and Spanish ports in the western basin of the Mediterranean; spending a fortnight at Gibraltar, and returning to Malta on the 29th September. Malta is not a healthy place in summer and autumn, so that ships are never kept there longer than necessary. After coaling and replenishing stores, the first division sailed again on the 10th of October, this time going to the eastward and joining the second division under Rear-Admiral Markham, the rendezvous being once more Nauplia, in the Morea.

The autumnal junction of the first and second divisions is always the time chosen for the fleet regatta. This year the pulling races took place at Salonica, and the sailing races at Lemnos. The Vali of Salonica presented an additional prize (presumably by order of the Sultan), and it was decided that this should be given as an extra prize in the All-comers' race. This race was a very fine sight, nearly eighty boats starting for it, and the Vali was greatly delighted. After the race the Commander-in-Chief received the Vali on the quarter-

deck of the Victoria, and the prize was produced. The Admiral directed the junior midshipman to receive it, saying to the Vali that he did so because in all probability the young officer would live longer than any one present, and would therefore cherish the memory of the event for a greater length of time.

The sailing regatta took place at a beautiful landlocked harbour at Moudros, in the island of Lemnos. It is an ideal place for boat-sailing, being a fine large sheet of water, perfectly landlocked, and the land all round fairly low, so that there is generally a good steady breeze, especially in the late autumn. Also, the island abounds with red-legged partridges, and on Saturday, when there is no school for the midshipmen, or drill for anybody else, sixty or seventy guns may be heard popping around Moudros harbour. The natives shoot also; but they are somewhat shy of wasting their ammunition on flying shots, and prefer to pot the birds from behind stone walls.[1] It is said that they rob the nests for the purpose of selling the eggs, which, if it is true, will very soon end in extermination.

Sir George Tryon's cup was won in 1892 by Commander Tate of the Colossus, a very successful boat-sailer, who had won three or four admirals' cups already.

[1] The British officers look upon the natives as poachers; but after all, they only shoot their own birds, in their own way.

Shortly after the regattas the Commander-in-Chief with the first division sailed for Malta.

During this winter, and the spring of 1893, Sir George and Lady Tryon entertained some distinguished guests at Malta.

Prince and Princess Ferdinand of Bulgaria, just a week married, arrived there on their honeymoon, and honoured the Admiral and Lady Tryon with their company at dinner, and were shown the sights of the island.

In April Sir George was summoned to attend her Majesty the Queen at Florence, and sailed in H.M.S. Edgar for Spezzia. He and his flag-lieutenant, Lord Gillford, then went on to Florence, and Sir George for the last time paid his respects to his Sovereign. He then hurried back to Malta and his squadron, where he had plenty of work to occupy him.

In the middle of this month of April the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord Spencer) and Lady Spencer, and Sir Frederick Richards, the second Sea Lord, arrived at Malta in the Admiral's yacht Surprise: they stayed with Sir George and Lady Tryon at Admiralty House, and were shown the sights of the island—the Lords of the Admiralty making a close inspection of the dockyard and other naval establishments, and witnessing a naval review at Corradino, the great naval drill-ground on the east side of the harbour. One of the most interesting features of this naval review was the

musical drill (or, more correctly, physical drill to music) by the seamen of the fleet. The men had been well drilled, and carried out the exercise with great precision and uniformity, and much to the satisfaction of the Lords of the Admiralty. As a preliminary to this picturesque drill it is always the custom for the seamen to take off their jumpers, or, in other words, their outside upper garment—and very smart and business-like they look in their clean flannels with their bare brawny arms; but some of the Malta ladies were quite shocked when they saw "Jack" beginning to peel, and promptly left the ground.

The Lords of the Admiralty paid only a very short and flying visit to Malta, arriving on the 17th, and sailing for Gibraltar on the night of the 19th, after dining with the Tryons; but they got a great deal into the three days, and while Sir George Tryon was showing Lord Spencer and Admiral Sir Frederick Richards over the dock-yard and other naval establishments, his wife was showing Lady Spencer the interesting and more secular sights.

Early in May the Princess of Wales and her two daughters the Princesses Victoria and Maud arrived at Malta in the royal yacht Osborne. Sir George dined with them on board the Osborne, and on the following day Lady Tryon escorted them to see a polo-match, and to some of the usual sights: their Royal Highnesses then went to tea with that ami-

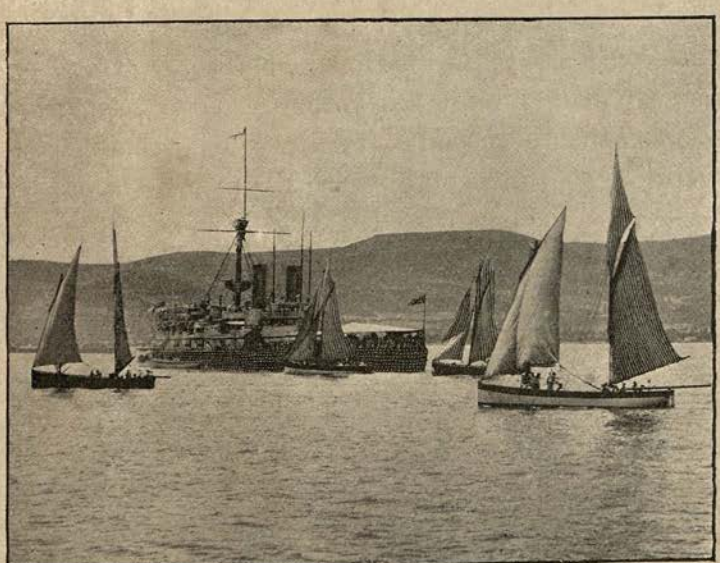
able and most interesting collector of curiosities, old Mr Harry of St Julien's; alas! himself since collected.

The record of the squadron cruises which has been detailed in this chapter will give the reader some idea of the way the ships of the Mediterranean fleet are kept moving, and thus constantly exercising—either under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief or the Rear-Admiral, though occasionally one of the senior captains is given a squadron to handle. But, in addition to the ordinary duties of a squadron leader, the Commander-in-Chief is burdened with a vast amount of official and semi-official correspondence. Delicate international questions also frequently call for his attention; and during the months that he spends at Malta a long-established tradition demands of him social duties of a somewhat onerous nature. In fact, he must not only be a thorough seaman and an able tactician, but he must be a diplomatist and a genial host, and he is finally expected to patronise and take an interest in all the local affairs of this curious little island, though of course not to interfere in any way with its government.

As a host Sir George Tryon was peculiarly happy. He also found time to interest himself in most of the local institutions of the island; and when subscriptions were wanted, his generous hand was ever ready to respond.

His principal business and his main interest were

of course with his squadron, and it may be said without fear of contradiction, or of wounding any one's feelings, that of all the long line of able men who have commanded the British Mediterranean fleet, none ever had that fleet in more perfect order or under better control than he had; nor did any admiral ever possess more absolutely the trust and confidence of his captains, not even Nelson himself.



Start of Launches.

CHAPTER XVI.

MANŒUVRES WITHOUT SIGNALS.

THE reader is warned that this chapter is of a somewhat technical nature, and if he has no taste for nautical technicalities he is advised to skip it.

It had long been the opinion of Sir George Tryon—and indeed of many other thoughtful naval officers—that it would be impossible to make effective signals in action. The speed at which modern battleships travel, and the extreme rapidity with which a sudden alteration of course or formation on the part of either combatant would change the whole tactical aspect of an encounter, seemed to point to the probability that, however smartly signals might be made, understood, and answered, it would be impossible for an admiral to take advantage quickly enough of opportunities which would be likely to offer themselves in the course of a battle.

The recent development of numerous quick-firing guns of small calibre, which would be sure to shoot away signal-halyards, and disable the signalmen, still further added to the assumed difficulty; so

that it became evident some plan must be devised by which an admiral could guide his fleet in action without signals. And thus it came about that Tryon instituted his famous "T A" system,—a system which it is to be feared has been hastily condemned without sufficient reason.

It may be explained that the hoisting of the two signal flags T A simply means that the ships of the squadron are to observe closely the Admiral's movements, as he may alter course, or do something which the squadron is to follow without further orders. Tryon's use of these flags as a preliminary to his manœuvres without signals did not therefore alter the meaning of this signal in the signal-book, but only extended it, and gave it a more particular signification. He describes his plan as "a system of fleet manœuvres with and without signals." That is to say, he reserves to himself the power of hoisting a formation signal at any time during the manœuvres; but the general idea is, that either no signals or only "one-flag" signals should be used. "Follow my leader" is the principle on which the plan is founded. Follow my leader, either in single line ahead, or my leaders in two lines ahead (divisions), or four lines ahead (subdivisions).

The Mediterranean squadron used frequently to exercise at "T A" under the guidance of Sir George Tryon, and the system commended itself to the judgment of the Rear-Admiral and the captains as the most practical method of conducting a squadron in action which had ever been

proposed. Subsequent events, which had nothing to do with the "T A" system, have unfortunately, but very naturally, thrown discredit upon it.

In a letter, dated March 1893, to his old friend Admiral Sir John Hopkins, who was then in command of the North American squadron, Tryon thus explains the leading features of his "T A" system :—

"The design and object of the T A system is to provide for the time when no signals are reasonably to be relied upon. Any introduction of any addition is a contribution towards defeating the object. Absolute precision is not to be expected in manœuvres, but a very little practice will show that sufficient accuracy for safety and all practical purposes is easily secured.

"I would ask any one just to go out with the ships in two columns, and then steer wherever you like, in any direction, without any signal whatever. All the leader of the second division must do is to keep his distance, and do as you do. Then do the same with subdivisions. Then begin again, and hoist the blue pendant,[1] and keep it up, altering course just when and how much or how little you please. Sometimes I dip the blue pendant when a turn is completed, but I find that is even too much to require, and prefer keeping it up altogether, so long as I intend to turn together. If you want precision at any time, make the usual signal by signal-book. If you want a particular formation,

[1] The blue pendant indicates that all the ships are to turn together, instead of "follow my leader."

make the formation signal—that is to say, when there is time at your disposal: maximum attainable accuracy is assured by using the signal-book; but when manœuvring on an opponent, and having got into a good position, you can only maintain it by taking your orders as it were from him, and by turning as he turns. There is no time for a signal, or you lose your position. If signal masts and yards are shot away, or signal-halyards gone, you can still manœuvre a fleet. Those without some such system cannot.

"To maintain freedom to move without notice in any direction, after turning together, you will often find it convenient to (when at exercise) make a formation signal.

"I find if one man is stationed with a glass always on the directing ship—usually the flagship—she will not turn a point without it being noticed, even if no helm signals are used.

"The system does not pretend to secure barrack-yard precision; that is not possible in action, and not even necessary, but it is surprising how nearly it is attained. I am convinced that it will be impossible to work the signal-books in action, but it may be possible to work single flags, and the fewer the better.

"It goes without saying, what we are going to do in action we should practise while we can."

This is Tryon's explanation of the intention and scope of his T A system, and it scarcely needs comment.

After the loss of the Victoria, it was sought in some quarters to show that this method of exercise was in some indirect way responsible for that loss. It was assumed that by manœuvring without signals, and hence (as Tryon admits) with less than the mathematical accuracy which is attainable by the use of signals, a certain loose habit of thought had been engendered in the minds of the admirals and captains, so that they came to think they had the power of making their ships turn and twist and perform evolutions which, as a matter of fact, were physically impossible: in short, that they had the power to override the fixed and immutable laws which govern the movements of steamships in motion.

This explanation of the disaster was, however, quite unreasonable. Such an idea never entered the minds of those admirals and captains who practised manœuvring without signals by the T A. system. They knew perfectly well that it bore the same relation to manœuvring by the signal-book as loose play at fencing bears to the systematic teaching in slow time of the points and parries, the cuts and the guards.

The performance of evolutions by signal is the goose-step of nautical drill; it teaches what can be done, and trains the eye to judge speed, distance, and turning power. But Sir George Tryon remembered (what some other high authorities seemed to have forgotten) that when he met an enemy's fleet at sea, he would not know their

speed or their individual turning powers, and that there would be no time to measure distances; and, above all, that he would not know his enemy's intentions until they were actually put in execution. This set him thinking of some plan whereby he could take immediate advantage of a designedly or fortuitously gained position, without the necessary delay involved in making a signal—a delay which would probably miss the assumed advantage; and this was what his system was intended to provide for, and did provide for.

His mind was an eminently practical one, and although he never had any doubt that our modern battleships were very little affected by any ordinary wind or weather, so far as their manœuvring powers were concerned, but that they turned their circles and their arcs, on all occasions, in practically the same time and space at given speeds, he yet discouraged a too devoted and academical study of these curves and arcs, as being likely to cause his officers to place an undue trust in the theoretical plotting off of ships' movements, and thereby cause them to neglect practice, and to forget that in action they would not have any data to go upon with regard to their enemy's movements, and would thus be obliged to manœuvre their ships entirely by the eye and their own unaided judgment. This was the lesson which he was continually trying to instil into the minds of his captains, and there can be very little doubt that it was an eminently practical lesson,

—a lesson which the next great naval war is certain to illustrate and enforce.

The "barrack-yard precision," which Tryon speaks of so scornfully, will never win a naval battle if pitted against superior practical experience in handling ships or squadrons by the eye, unaided by the use of sextant, protractors, or other artificial aids to judgment, for the simple reason that there will be no time to use these instruments, and the opportunity will have gone while the theorist is thinking about them. This by no means implies that sextants, and protractors, and compasses for taking horizontal angles, are not extremely useful — in fact, indispensable instruments, especially for instructional purposes; but it does imply that they will be of no use in action, and this is just what Tryon so clearly foresaw. He was quite aware that it was necessary people should learn to walk before they could run; but he endeavoured to teach his pupils to run also, as he wished his side to win the race.

It was remarked in an earlier chapter that Tryon was always ready for a discussion on naval tactics with any one who had any ideas on the subject, or who might be supposed to have formed opinions worth listening to. This was specially the case during his last command in the Mediterranean; and the captains of the Mediterranean fleet can well remember the Commander-in-Chief's office in his house in the Strada Mezzodi, Malta, where, after discussing the ordinary business on which

the captain called, the Admiral would produce a set of little models out of a drawer, or a sheet of paper with naval tactical diagrams on it, and ask some leading question, or make some proposition as to the best formation for attack, which would be certain to lead to a discussion.

Sir George Tryon dearly loved an argument, and he used to say that he hated people who agreed with him, meaning thereby that he did not think much of them if they had no opinion of their own, or were afraid to express it. He had a wonderful way of getting at other people's opinions without seeming to do so. He was fair and generous in argument, and ready to hear all sides of a question — that is to say, questions which might properly be discussed with those under his orders; though, it is almost needless to say, he permitted no argument in questions of discipline, or the administration of his squadron. Here he was the Commander-in-Chief, not the inquirer into open questions of tactics.

It must be obvious, even to our non-naval readers, that the leading idea of the "T A" system was to enable one mind, the brain of one man, to actuate the forces of a squadron, so as to concentrate them on any particular point during a naval action, without making signals, or at any rate with the very simplest "one-flag" signals.

As long as a squadron can be satisfactorily manœuvred in single line ahead it is not neces-

sary to make any signals; but there are cases where single line ahead could not be used, save at a serious tactical disadvantage—such, for instance, as a general chase, or a general retreat, with the enemy in line abreast. In such cases a line ahead would of course be out of the question, and thus Tryon had made provision by the hoisting of a single flag (which need not be answered) for the ships to turn together, and by so doing to get into line abreast, or bow, or quarter-line, or to reverse the line altogether—in fact, to assume any of the simpler formations.

Much has been written lately on naval tactics, both by naval officers and civilians,—though principally by the latter,—and opinions have been freely expressed as to the best formation for a fleet of modern battleships to attack in. Such minor naval battles as have taken place since the introduction of steam and armour-clads have been largely quoted, and imported into the controversy, usually with the object of supporting some preconceived opinions and theories upon the subject. It is but natural that students should grasp eagerly at any little bit of practical demonstration which has taken place, either with the view of supporting some theory, or with an open and inquiring mind; but the application of the lessons taught—or supposed to be taught—by the records of these sea-fights appears in many cases to have been ill-judged, and very often misleading. Conclusions have been jumped to, and theories formed with regard to guns,

armour, speed, size, rams, torpedoes, or some of the various attributes of a warship, which were not justified by the evidence; and the worst of it is that these hasty conclusions are apt to be acted on in the production of future warship designs: though we may fairly congratulate ourselves that in this country we have on the whole shown more stability, and less tendency to be carried away by every new and attractive theory, than some of our neighbours.

It is impossible for practical naval officers to read the generally accepted and popular accounts of these battles without seeing at a glance that all sorts of actions and incidents are attributed to design, when they were really nothing else but pure chance. Very possibly in many cases the innocent actors—after reading the accounts—have come to think and believe that they really did do designedly the things with which an imaginative historian or war correspondent has credited them. This is only human nature, though it does not alter the fact.

But indeed it is not necessary to confine ourselves to the records of modern naval battles in order to see this tendency to jump to conclusions, and to attribute design where there was none. One has only to look at a popular account of one of the old sailing-ship battles—Trafalgar,[1] for instance—in order to see captains, on both sides, credited with performing all sorts of manœuvres, in

[1] Thiers' account of the battle of Trafalgar, in his 'Consulate and Empire,' shows what a lively imagination can do in this direction.

dismasted and rudderless ships, over which they had no more control than they had over an eclipse of the moon. Such stories are picturesque, but obviously not true.

Tryon was under no delusion as to his powers of controlling the movements of his squadron by the ordinary system of signals when once the fight had begun; and hence he instituted his "T A" system, believing it to be the only feasible method of keeping his squadron in hand, and those who practised it under his guidance came to a similar conclusion.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CATASTROPHE.

On the 22d of June 1893 the combined first and second divisions of the Mediterranean fleet were lying at anchor off Beyrout, on the coast of Syria. The flag of the Commander-in-Chief Sir George Tryon was flying in the Victoria, and the flag of Rear-Admiral Markham was flying in the Camperdown. The other ships present were the Nile, Dreadnought, Inflexible, Collingwood, Phaeton, Edinburgh, Sans Pareil, Edgar, Amphion, Fearless, Barham.

The Trafalgar was the proper flagship of the Rear-Admiral, but she was under repair at Malta, and his flag was therefore hoisted temporarily in the Camperdown.

According to the published programme of the movements of the squadron, it was to sail on the 22d for Tripoli, a port about sixty miles to the northward of Beyrout, thence to Latakia, Famagousta, Larnaca, Limasol, Adalia, and Suda Bay.

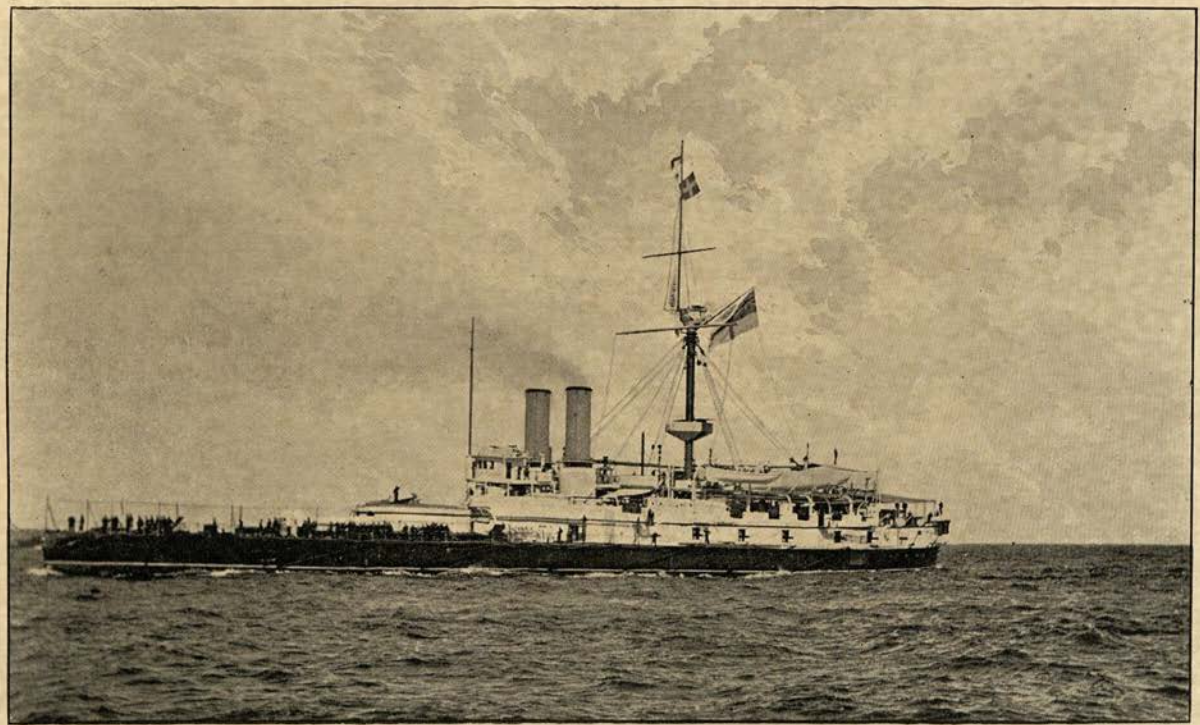
Many accounts have been written of the naval disaster of the 22d of June. There is an excellent

one in the 'Naval Annual' for 1894 by that talented and well-informed writer on naval subjects, Mr James R. Thursfield, which can be recommended to the reader if he has not already seen it; but it is thought that, as an introduction to the subject, two brief narratives by eye-witnesses will be of special interest.

The first we propose to give is a plain unvarnished tale by Staff-Commander Hawkins-Smith, the navigating officer of the Victoria, who stood beside Sir George Tryon during his last moments, and heard his last words. He says:—

"The fleet left Beyrout at 10 A.M. on the 22d June 1893 for Tripoli, forming in single line abreast to port, steering N. by E. At 1.30 P.M. the course was altered to N.E. by N.

"Shortly after 2 P.M. the Commander-in-Chief sent for the Staff-Commander to bring the chart to his cabin. The flag-captain was there. The Admiral asked what the position of the flagship was, and what course the fleet was steering. These were pointed out to him. The ships were steering N.E. by N., shortly to be altered to E. by N., so soon as they were far enough to the northward to pass Ramkine lighthouse, 2½ miles off. The position already assigned for the anchorage of the fleet was"—the anchor-bearings are then given in detail. "To bring the fleet into the required formation, the Admiral said he would form it into two divisions, line ahead; and when far enough past the line of bearings for anchoring—viz., Lion's Tower, S. by E.



H.M.S. VICTORIA.

—he would invert the course of the columns by turning inwards 16 points, leaders together, the rest in succession; and when back again on the line of bearing, alter course together 8 points to port. Also he would place the columns six cables apart for this manœuvre. It was then remarked that the least distance the columns should be apart was eight cables (the Victoria's diameter of turning circle with full helm being just three cables). To this the Admiral replied, 'Yes; it shall be eight cables.' The usual signals were then made to form columns of divisions in line ahead, columns disposed abeam to port, and columns to be six cables apart. While this signal was flying it was seen by the Staff-Commander, who, knowing the Admiral had expressed his intention to place the columns at eight cables, and thinking it probable that his intention had been accidentally forgotten for the moment, went to the after-bridge, and seeing the flag-lieutenant, asked him if he had not made a mistake. The flag-lieutenant replied, 'No; I think not,' and looking at a piece of paper showed it to the Staff-Commander, on it being written six cables, in the Admiral's handwriting. The Staff-Commander then asked the flag-lieutenant to make sure before hauling the signal down, and the latter went down to the cabin and received from the Commander-in-Chief the reply 'Keep the six cables up.'

"At 2.45 P.M. the course of the fleet was altered to E. by N., and Ramkine lighthouse was passed at a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

"At 3.20 the Lion's Tower bore S. by E., the Commander-in-Chief coming forward at this time on to the top of the chart-house; and the signal to invert the course of the columns by altering course 16 points inwards was hoisted at 3.27.

"It was the intention to have run on for ten minutes, so as to allow a distance of 1½ miles for inverting the lines and getting the ships into station, previous to altering 8 points together to port—the speed of the fleet being 8·8 knots.

"A slight delay in hoisting the signal close up on board the Camperdown occurred, so that the signal was hauled down and the helm put over at 3.31.

"As the two ships (Victoria and Camperdown) neared one another the port engine of the Victoria was reversed, and when about 10 points round both engines were put 'full speed astern,' these directions being given by the Commander-in-Chief. The two ships rapidly neared one another, and the Victoria, being turned in a smaller circle than the Camperdown, was slightly in advance of the latter, so that the stem of the Camperdown struck the Victoria on the starboard bow, about ten feet abaft the anchor, at about 3.34—the angle between the lines of keel of the two ships being about 6 points, or 68°.

"When the collision appeared to be inevitable, the order was given to close water-tight doors, and as the two ships struck, the order was given, 'Out collision-mat.'

"The Camperdown backed astern, and exertions

were made to get the collision-mat over the hole; but the ship settled so quickly by the head that this could not be done. In the meantime (the captain having left the top of the chart-house by order of the Commander-in-Chief to see about the watertight doors) it was thought that the ship, being struck so far forward, would keep afloat for a considerable time, and being then in deep water (70 to 80 fathoms) it was considered desirable to steer for shallow water—the nearest part of the 5-fathom line bearing about south, distant 4½ miles. The ship's head was turned in that direction, by going astern with the port engine and ahead with the starboard, so as to clear the Nile, the helm being still hard a-starboard. As soon as the ship's head was pointed clear of the Nile, both engines were put ahead, and the revolution telegraph put to 38 revolutions, or 7 knots.

"As the ship's head came round towards south, the order to right the helm was given; but the reply came from the quartermaster, 'I can't move the wheel; the pressure is off.'

"As soon as the collision occurred some ships were seen to be lowering their boats, which, being noticed by the Commander-in-Chief, he ordered the signal to be made, 'Annul sending boats,' and then for the ships to form on each quarter of the Victoria. This was done so as to have both the ships and their boats near at hand as the Victoria steamed towards the shallow water. When it was seen that the mat could not be got into

place, the Commander-in-Chief gave orders to close all the apertures on the forecastle deck, such as the cable-bitts, windlass-covers, &c., and the men were at this until they had to be called in, with the water up to their waists. The ship all this time was gradually getting deeper by the bows, and listing slightly to starboard.

"At this time (immediately after the engines had been put 'ahead') the Commander-in-Chief remarked to the Staff-Commander, 'I think she is going.' The latter replied, 'Yes, sir; I think she is.' The Commander-in-Chief then ordered the signal to be made 'Send boats,' and turning round to give these orders to the signalmen, who were on the forebridge abaft the funnels, he saw one of the midshipmen standing near the standard compass, and said to him, 'Don't stop there, youngster—go to a boat.' These were probably his last words, for a few moments after this the ship gave a heavy lurch to starboard, and then turned over almost instantaneously, taking down with her both the Commander-in-Chief and the Staff-Commander, who were still on the top of the chart-house, the flag-lieutenant having been sent on a message to the captain, and both these officers were returning to make their reports when the ship went over, they at the moment being on the ladder leading from the deck to the forebridge.

"It seems almost certain that the Admiral was taken down with the ship, by being entangled with some of the numerous obstacles, the top of the

chart-house being a comparatively small space, with the usual pattern rails round it, an awning spread over it about 7 feet 6 inches high, and three masts, one on the fore-end, and one on either side, with a yard across these two latter, on which were worked the speed-cone and flags: these, with their stays, shrouds, and backstays were almost like a net. The Staff-Commander was taken down some way by being foul of some of these obstructions, and when clear of them, and coming up, felt himself being taken down again by the ship's suction; and then saw a dark shadow over him, which he believes to have been the ship, but striking out away from it, eventually came up so exhausted, that had he not found close to him, on reaching the surface, an oar and small spar, which he placed under each arm, he would certainly have been drowned. On coming up he saw that the ship had disappeared, and in her place a line of white foam, which shortly reached him and broke over him. This would also have finished him, as it did many others who were in the same exhausted condition, but who were not able to support themselves on wreckage.

"The Staff-Commander's watch, from which the times above mentioned were taken, stopped at 3h. 44m. 30sec. This gives an outside time of 13 minutes 45 seconds from the time the helm was put over to the time of capsizing, and assuming the collision took place at 3h. 34m., this would give an extreme time of 10½ minutes for the ship floating after she was struck; but as it would take

a small interval before the water stopped the watch, the time is likely to be less.

"There is little doubt the Admiral's signal not to send boats was the means of avoiding a much greater loss of life; for had the boats been near the ship, many would certainly have been close alongside, for no one expected the ship to capsize in the sudden way she did, and then the boats would have been sunk, and their crews killed or injured by the ship turning over on them.

"One remark made by the Commander-in-Chief, in the hearing of the Staff-Commander and the flag-lieutenant, was, 'It is entirely my fault.'"

Such is the plain and graphic, though doubtless accurate, narrative of the man who stood beside his chief during his last moments. And Staff-Commander Hawkins-Smith adds:—

"Nearly all the various yarns which have got into the papers, such as the coxswain offering the lifebuoy, and the Admiral refusing to save himself, are pure inventions. He went down, and was seen by no one again; and I never expected to see him, as I am sure he, being a short-breathed man, could not have kept the water out of his lungs as long as I was able to do, and I could not have done so a second or two longer.

"He was perfectly calm and collected to the last, and died as he had lived, a brave man."

Within a month from the loss of the Victoria a court-martial assembled at Malta to inquire into the causes of that loss — technically to try Captain

Bourke (who was saved) and the surviving officers and ship's company for the loss of their ship. The proceedings were published as a Parliamentary Blue-book, and these, together with the finding and the Admiralty minute thereon, will be presently referred to; but it is thought that another personal narrative of the disaster, from another point of view—viz., from outside the ship—will be of interest to the reader.

The following was written in a private letter to the author by Captain Brackenbury of the Edinburgh (who has kindly consented to its publication) about a fortnight after the disaster.

The Edinburgh was the second ship in the second division—that is to say, immediately astern of the Camperdown. And we may here make a short digression, in order to point out the extremely difficult position in which the captains of the two second ships—Nile and Edinburgh—found themselves, as soon as it became obvious that a collision between their respective leaders was inevitable. The distance between the ships in column was only two cables. Both Nile and Edinburgh had not only commenced to turn, but had turned through a considerable arc, when they saw their leaders going astern with both engines, and almost immediately afterwards the collision took place.

One moment's indecision or hesitation on the part of these two captains, and the country would have had to mourn a double, if not a triple, disaster. There was no certainty as to what was the best

thing to do. One did one thing and one the other —that is to say, one went inside and the other outside. It must be remembered that the speed of the ships was nearly 9 knots; and 10,000 tons moving at 9 knots represents a good deal of momentum, which cannot be either suddenly arrested or very rapidly diverted from its course.

Captain Noel of the Nile appears from the first to have looked upon the signal as a mistake, and to have made up his mind to turn short, or, in other words, in a smaller circle than the Victoria, by using full helm, and finally by reversing his inner screw, and thus keeping clear of his leader whatever happened. His ship was a good turner, better than the Victoria, and so also was his next astern, the Dreadnought.

On the other hand, Captain Brackenbury of the Edinburgh appears to have made up his mind that the Victoria was about to circle round, and thus lead her line round outside the Camperdown and the second division. His ship was a particularly unhandy one—in fact, the worst turning battleship in the fleet—so that when a collision between the leaders became inevitable, he had very little time left for thinking. He righted his helm and passed outside his leader.

The highest credit is undoubtedly due to both these captains for the promptness and decision with which they acted; though only those who have handled modern battleships in a fleet can thoroughly appreciate the difficulty of their position.

With this digression we will now return to Captain Brackenbury's narrative.

He wrote from Suda Bay (in the island of Candia) on July 9 :—

"We arrived here yesterday from the sad waters of Tripoli, where we remained for a fortnight after the disaster, patrolling the coast, and waiting in case any bodies should be cast on shore; but the sea gave up none of the Victoria's. For some miles along the shore there were bits of wreckage, small fragments of boats and spars, &c., everything smashed to pieces. Not one body which was not taken up immediately after the capsize has appeared. I cannot to this moment account for the catastrophe. I will give you an account of it, and you must draw your own deductions, until a court-martial of the survivors perhaps tells us what was in the Commander-in-Chief's mind.[1]

"We left Beyrout on the morning of the 22d with a brilliant manœuvre — the second division clearing obliquely from the front of the Commander-in-Chief, and then all proceeded in line abreast.

"During the afternoon we formed in lines ahead, to port; columns being six cables apart, course E. by N.

"The anchoring signal was made, to anchor in columns of divisions—guides of columns N. by W. from the guide of the fleet, ships in column E. by N. from their guides. Columns two cables apart, ships in column two cables apart. If you observe our

[1] The court-martial did not elucidate this point.

formation, and the course we were steering, you will see that the lines had to be reversed to get the ships in proper bearing for anchoring. Some considerable time after, when we were off Tripoli, the signal was made for the first division to alter course 16 points to port in succession; the second division, 16 points to starboard in succession. The signal, considering the distance of the columns apart, was difficult to understand, and impossible to execute if opposite ships turned simultaneously inwards. However, you know how accustomed we were to brilliant manœuvres, which afterwards the Commander-in-Chief would explain, and generally show the exact calculations he had made; and I must say I never saw him do a risky thing: it was against all his teaching; and, master-hand at tactics that he was, and magnificent seaman, it was the most unlikely thing in the world that he of all men should make a mistake, or miscalculation of distance on turning circles. After some little delay the signal was answered. My idea was, that as the distance between the columns was too little to allow of both divisions turning inwards, the Commander-in-Chief was going to circle outside the second division, and as he himself led the first division in the Victoria, I felt no misgiving. However, after I had put my helm hard a-port to follow the Camperdown, to my dismay I saw the Victoria turning rapidly with helm hard a-starboard. Camperdown reversed her engines full speed astern, I believe, and I was going right into her, when I

righted the helm and starboarded, and sheered out of line. Immediately after this the two flagships collided—the Camperdown cutting right into the Victoria's starboard-bow, just abaft the anchor. The Nile, from the first following Victoria, had reversed one screw and rounded sharply under her stern.

"The collision to look at was terrible, and the Victoria was done for. However, the Camperdown soon backed off, and the Victoria turned right round and headed for the shore, 5 miles off, signal flying from her mast-head to 'open';[1] and as we were all preparing our boats, and some in fact had shoved off, signal was made not to send boats, but to have them ready. The bows of the Victoria rapidly immersed; then she heeled over quickly to starboard, turned completely over, with her propellers still revolving in the air, and plunged head first into the deep. The boats dashed after the heads bobbing in the water, and the survivors were soon picked up and taken to the nearest ships. It seemed too dreadful to realise. It seemed impossible such a thing could happen; and yet there we were, all motionless round the spot, where a few broken pieces of wood marked the place where the Victoria was. And the Camperdown, with her nose down in the water, and her stern cocked up, looked as if a similar fate awaited her. Minutes went by, and I was hoping to see the flag hoisted somewhere,

[1] This means that the other ships of the squadron are to get farther away from her—to get out of her way, in fact.

but no; and at last, with the most bitter sorrow, one had to realise that the Commander-in-Chief, that brilliant Admiral who so ably led us, whose personality had won our admiration and affection, was resting far under those glancing waters, with the wreck of his flagship and 400 men,—gone down absolutely in the midst of his squadron, which ten minutes before he was leading without a thought of danger.

"The scene haunts one to this moment; but all seems swallowed up in the loss of the Admiral, he was so magnificent a leader, so brilliant a seaman; his perfect devotion to his squadron and to the service made him so remarkable an example. It is too sad! . . . The implicit confidence we all had in him —and which he so justly merited—undoubtedly led to this most lamentable and unlooked-for disaster."

The court-martial which assembled on board the Hibernia at Malta on the 17th July, and sat until the 27th, to inquire into the loss of the Victoria, went most exhaustively into the subject, and examined as witnesses all the survivors who could throw the smallest light upon the subject. It was presided over by Admiral Sir Michael Culme Seymour, the new Commander-in-Chief of the station; and Captain A. L. Winsloe was sent out from England to act as prosecutor.

Notwithstanding that the court was directed to try Captain Bourke and the surviving officers and ship's company of the Victoria for the loss of their ship, it was generally felt that Rear-Admiral Mark-

ham and Captain Johnstone of the Camperdown were also indirectly on their trial; and that, moreover, their position was a peculiar one, as they could not claim the right of calling or cross-examining witnesses, which the law allowed to the nominal prisoners.

Admiral Markham took upon himself the entire responsibility for the movements of the Camperdown, and he was allowed to be present in court; and although he was not allowed to cross-examine witnesses himself, or to make any statement in his defence, he was permitted to suggest questions, which, if the court thought proper, they then put to the witnesses. In this way he was enabled to bring out points which he considered would exonerate him from blame.

The most interesting witness examined was Captain Bourke, who was also the principal prisoner.

The regulations of the service hold the captain of a ship responsible for her safe navigation; and there is no provision which allows him to shunt that responsibility on to the shoulders of the navigating officer, or even of the Admiral himself. But, on the other hand, no officer is permitted to disobey the orders of a senior officer present in person. This, then, was Captain Bourke's dilemma. He saw the danger of the evolution from the first, and the evidence given at the court-martial showed that he remonstrated with the Commander-in-Chief up to the limits which discipline allows. After that he had nothing to do but to obey orders.

The narrative of Staff-Commander Hawkins-Smith shows that he also remonstrated quite as far as the etiquette of the service permitted by requesting the flag-lieutenant (Lord Gillford) to go down to the Admiral and find out if the distance of six cables, ordered to be signalled, was not a mistake, or an oversight, on the part of the Admiral, as the latter had told the Staff-Commander that it was to be eight cables.

The answer which the flag-lieutenant received from the Admiral was, "Leave it at six cables."

It must ever remain a matter of pure speculation as to what could have been running in the mind of Sir George Tryon when he gave this answer. He spoke no word to any one which afforded any clue to a solution of this mystery. Captain Brackenbury describes the situation very truly when he says, "The implicit confidence we all had in him—and which he so justly merited—undoubtedly led to this most lamentable and unlooked-for disaster."

A man who had inspired less confidence would scarcely have been so implicitly obeyed; and the Victoria would probably have been now afloat. Yet, however deeply her loss is to be deplored, it must be acknowledged that the circumstances attending it afforded—in more than one respect—examples of admirable discipline.

The evidence given at the court-martial by the flag-lieutenant corroborated in all essential particulars the narrative of the Staff-Commander

and the evidence of Captain Bourke. The flag-lieutenant simply received his orders from the Admiral and carried them out. All that he had to do was to make certain that he understood the Admiral's intentions, and then convey those intentions to the squadron by signal in the prescribed form according to the signal-book. Some questions were asked at the court-martial, tending to show that the turning signal might have been made in another form; but it was clearly shown that the signal was made exactly as the Admiral intended it to be made. It was no part of the flag-lieutenant's duty to question the propriety of the signal, nor to point out the danger of it, even if he saw it, as he probably did. Had there been any reasonable doubt as to the form in which the signal ought to be made, it might have been the duty of the flag-lieutenant to call the attention of the Admiral to a note in the signal-book, an instruction, or any other technical matter bearing on the subject; but to have done more than this would have been unjustifiable presumption on his part.

On board the Camperdown (Admiral Markham's temporary flagship, which was leading the second division), as soon as the signal was reported to the Rear-Admiral he remarked that there must be a mistake about it, as the evolution was an impossibility with the columns at six cables apart, and he ordered his flag-lieutenant not to acknowledge the signal, but to make an inquiry by semaphore to the Victoria as to its meaning.

Before, however, this semaphore signal could be made, another one came from the Victoria to the Camperdown, to ask the Rear-Admiral what he was waiting for.

The idea then seems to have struck Admiral Markham that the intention of the Commander-in-Chief was to circle round outside the second division, turning on a very much larger circle, in the Victoria; the other ships of his division, of course, following in his wake, as the order was to turn in succession,—a manœuvre which would have been perfectly safe, though it would not have been in accordance with the signal as it was made. But it was argued that as the Commander-in-Chief was leading the first division in person, he had the whole matter entirely in his own hands, and that he could have kept the signal for the first division to turn flying (in other words, not made it executive) until after the leading ships of the second division had turned, and then, hauling down the first division turning signal, make a large circle round the former; and it was further argued that, as this was the only safe way in which the two columns could turn towards each other at a distance of six cables, it was reasonable to suppose that this was the intention of the Commander-in-Chief, notwithstanding that there was no provision for such a manœuvre in the signal-book.

Admiral Markham had the same implicit confidence in Sir George Tryon that everybody else had, and he accepted the signal and commenced the

fatal turn. Once the two ships had turned eight points, or, in other words, had got end on to each other, it was practically impossible to avoid a collision, unless one or other of them had promptly reversed her helm; but it was certainly not open to the Camperdown to do this. Having once acquiesced in the signal by answering it, she had no course possible except to obey it literally.

It would scarcely interest our readers to enter into, or to discuss, the large amount of technical evidence given before the court-martial, which sat from the 17th to the 27th of July. The object has been to give a general idea of the catastrophe, without entering into all the details, and in this view some passages of Captain Bourke's evidence may be quoted. After touching on what passed between him and Sir George Tryon immediately before the fatal manœuvre, he proceeds:—

"Sir George Tryon had a master-mind. He loved argument, but was a strict disciplinarian. He always used to say he hated people who agreed with him; but that, again, was different from arguing against a direct order. With this, and the fact that I was serving under an Admiral whose experience was far-reaching, and whose vast knowledge of the subject of manœuvres was admitted by all, I seem to have left his cabin not clear in my mind what was to happen, but confident, somehow, that the Commander-in-Chief himself must be clear as to his intentions."

Then, after commenting at some length on various

points brought out by the evidence of the numerous witnesses examined before the Court, and referring specially to the fact that the Commander-in-Chief was standing beside him on the chart-house while the fatal manœuvre was being performed, Captain Bourke says:—

"At this point, having, I trust, touched upon all the important facts brought out in evidence, I shall refer to the order and discipline by which all were influenced in the short but terrible time between the ramming of the Victoria and her capsizing.

"When the crushing blow delivered by the ram of the Camperdown was felt, the impression which passed through every one's mind must have been one of serious apprehension. No one in the ship, knowing what had happened, could have failed to appreciate the conditions were certainly serious. With this in view, I should like to lay before the Court a few remarks on what I submit was the discipline and self-control that was exhibited by all. There was absolutely no panic, no shouting, no rushing aimlessly about. Officers went quietly to their stations, and everything was prepared, and the men were all in their positions for hoisting out boats or performing any duty that they may have been ordered to carry out. The men on the forecastle worked with a will until the water was up to their waists, and it was only when they were ordered aft that they left their work to fall in on the upper deck with the rest of the ship's company.

"In the case of the men working below I was a witness to their coolness. When the order was passed down for every one to go on deck, there was no haste or hurry to desert the flat. I can further testify to the men below in the engine-room. In the starboard one, all were in their stations; the engineer officer was there, the artificer, and the stokers. I am sure that those in the port engine-room and the boiler-rooms were equally true to themselves, to the country they were serving, and to the trust that was reposed in them.

"In all the details of this terrible accident one spot especially stands out, and that is the heroic conduct of those who, to the end, remained below, stolidly yet boldly, at their place of duty. All honour to them especially.

"The men fallen in on the upper deck also showed the same spirit. I would recall to you what I described in my evidence. When the men were turned about to face the ship's side, it must have passed through the minds of many that to 'look out for oneself' would be the best thing to do. The men must have seen the others coming from forward wet, which in itself might have increased their apprehensions. This order to turn about was given apparently about a minute before the end, and I can hear of not one single instance of any man rushing to the side. It only wanted two or three to start a panic, but I think it should be on record that not one was found who had

not that control over himself which characterises true discipline and order. It has been shown in evidence that no one jumped from the ship until just as she gave the lurch which ended in her capsizing.

"I imagine there is not a single survivor who can give any clearer reason for his being saved than that he was more fortunate than his neighbours.

"There is one deeply sad circumstance connected with the accident, and that is the very large proportion of midshipmen who lost their lives. These young officers at the commencement of their career were thus cut off; but it will be to their undying honour that, young as they were, they also showed that spirit of trust and bravery, and one and all remained at their posts till the end.

"There is no doubt that among those lost many individual acts of heroism and disregard of self must have been displayed, but I regret I am only in a position to state one. This is the case of the Rev. Samuel Morris, chaplain of the Victoria, than whom no one in the ship was more beloved and respected. It is his words—'Steady, men, steady'—when the end came, which bring before one the appreciation of his coolness and valour.

"Even at the moment of the ship capsizing we only hear of him, careless of his own safety, exhorting the men to be cool and calm.

"In his daily life on board he mixed with the

men, knew all their thoughts, and advised them n their troubles. A noble character like this inculcates by his example the discipline and obedience which were shown on board the Victoria.

"Amongst those saved equal acts of bravery and coolness were displayed. It has been my privilege to forward some names to the Commander-in-Chief for the part they took in saving life.

"I have now to conclude my statement by expressing my own deep grief and that of the survivors of H.M.S. Victoria for the terrible loss we have sustained in the death of the late Commander-in-Chief and so many of the officers and crew of our ship. It is a feeling deep and sincere, which must ever remain in the hearts of us all. For myself I cannot pretend to describe the overwhelming loss which I have experienced in the death of my chief, and my kindest friend. He was always ready to help and advise—there was never any one in trouble whose cause he would not identify himself with.

"It is not necessary for me to praise him as an officer. Every one who knew him — ay, and many others — acknowledged his worth. It adds doubly to my sorrow when I know that the service has lost one of its best and most capable leaders."

The court-martial found as follows:—

"The Court finds that the loss of her Majesty's ship Victoria off Tripoli, on the coast of Syria, on the 22d day of June 1893, was caused by a

collision with her Majesty's ship Camperdown; and it is with the deepest sorrow and regret that the Court further finds that this collision was due to an order given by the then Commander-in-Chief, the late Vice-Admiral Sir George Tryon, to the two divisions in which the fleet was formed to turn sixteen points inwards, leaders first, the others in succession, the columns at that time being only six cables apart.

"*Secondly.* That after the collision had occurred, everything that was possible was done on board her Majesty's ship Victoria, and in the squadron generally, both to save life and to save the Victoria; and the Court is of opinion that the order given by the late Vice-Admiral Sir George Tryon to 'annul sending boats but to hold them in readiness,' was under the circumstances a wise one.

"*Thirdly.* The Court finds that no blame is attributable to Captain the Hon. Maurice Archibald Bourke, or to any other of the surviving officers and ship's company of her Majesty's ship Victoria, for the loss of that ship, and doth therefore acquit them accordingly.

"The Court desires to record its opinion that the discipline and order maintained on board the Victoria to the last by every one was in the highest degree creditable to all concerned.

"*Fourthly.* The Court strongly feels that although it is much to be regretted that Rear-Admiral Albert Hastings Markham did not carry out his first intention of semaphoring to the Com-

mander-in-Chief his doubt as to the signal, it would be fatal to the best interests of the service to say he was to blame for carrying out the directions of his Commander-in-Chief present in person.

"*Fifthly.* The Court has placed in the minutes all evidence obtainable with regard to the closing or otherwise of the water-tight doors of her Majesty's ship Victoria; but does not feel itself called upon, nor does it consider itself competent, to express an opinion as to the causes of the capsizing of the Victoria."

The members of this court-martial were Admiral Sir M. Culme Seymour; Vice-Admiral R. E. Tracey; Captains A. P. M. Lake, P. Aldrich, W. C. Karslake, R. F. Hammick, E. F. Jeffreys, and C. G. Robinson, —with Mr H. H. Rickard as officiating Deputy Judge-Advocate.

The Admiralty reviewed the proceedings and finding of the court-martial in a minute, issued by them on the 28th of October, from which the following may be quoted:—

"(1.) The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have had under consideration the proceedings of the court-martial ordered to assemble at Malta under the presidency of Admiral Sir Michael Culme Seymour, Commander-in-Chief, to inquire into all the circumstances attending the loss of H.M.S. Victoria, which was brought about by collision with H.M.S. Camperdown on the 22d of June last, and having carefully weighed the evidence adduced, they concur in the finding of the Court.

"(2.) The opinion expressed by the Court as to the order and discipline maintained on board the Victoria up to the moment of her sinking is fully shared by their Lordships. It is in the highest degree honourable to all concerned, and will ever remain a noble example to the service.

"(3.) Their Lordships concur in the feeling expressed by the Court that it is much to be regretted that Rear-Admiral A. H. Markham did not carry out his first intention of semaphoring to the Commander-in-Chief his doubts as to the signal; but they deem it necessary to point out that the Rear-Admiral's belief that the Commander-in-Chief would circle round him was not justified by the proper interpretation of the signal. The evidence shows that it was owing to this misconception that the precautions, which mistrust of the order given by the Commander-in-Chief should have prompted, were not at once taken by the Rear-Admiral, and that he did not order Captain Johnstone to reverse the starboard screw, and to close the water-tight doors, until after the ships had turned eight points inwards and were end on."

The separate minute above alluded to was published, and presented to both Houses of Parliament, accompanied by a long and exhaustive report from the Director of Naval Construction, which, after going minutely into the evidence given at the court-martial as to the closing or otherwise of the water-tight doors in the Victoria, demonstrated that the ship would neither have capsized nor sunk, but

would have been "able to make port under her own steam," if the water-tight doors had been closed in time. The evidence showed that the usual time occupied in closing the water-tight doors in the Victoria was three minutes; but that the order to close the doors on this occasion was given little more than one minute before the collision occurred, and therefore a great many of the doors and hatches in the forepart of the ship were not closed at all, or at any rate imperfectly closed, and the water thus found its way into a number of compartments which were not breached by the collision; and this had the effect of gradually depressing the bows of the ship until her upper deck was under water, at the same time causing her to list more and more to starboard, until the battery ports, and the turret ports, and the armoured door in the screen-bulkhead, came down to the level of the sea: after this had taken place the water rushed in through these openings, the remaining small margin of stability was lost, and the ship capsized and sunk.

The all-important question then suggested itself to the public mind, Why were the doors not closed in time? Seeing that Captain Bourke from the first fully realised the danger of the evolution which was about to be performed, why did he not himself give the order to close them directly the signal was hauled down?

The answer to this is a very simple one. It was —in the strictest sense of the words—a moral impossibility for him to do so, consistently with disci-

pline. The Commander-in-Chief was standing beside him, and it would have been neither more nor less than a gross act of insubordination, one might almost say a personal insult to his Admiral, to have done so, until it became obvious to all that a collision was imminent. It would have been absolutely inconsistent with the unwritten laws and practice of naval discipline.

The whole British nation admired and rejoiced in the fine display of discipline manifested by the officers and ship's company of the Victoria under most trying circumstances, when they felt their ship absolutely sinking under them, yet remained unflinchingly at their posts until the last. The foundation of that discipline, the guiding principle, the spirit which gave it life, was precisely the same spirit which forbade Captain Bourke to give the order for the closing of water-tight doors in the presence of Sir George Tryon.

We may regret it; but at the same time it is not logical to expect to have the discipline just when we want it, and to dispense with it, or to have it overriden, when we do not want it.

A bluejacket will not respect and implicitly obey his officer, nor will he stand to his guns, or his station, amidst all difficulties and all dangers, unless he knows that the captain shows the same respect, and gives the same implicit obedience to his Admiral. The spirit of discipline must begin at the top of the tree, and spread downwards through all the numerous ranks and ratings of

that highly organised community, the ship's company of a man-of-war. In no other way can it be maintained.

The court-martial did not clear up the point, which from the first presented itself as an enigma to the minds of all those who knew Sir George Tryon — viz., by what mental process he arrived at the conclusion that six cables apart was a safe distance at which two columns of battleships could be turned inwards, or towards one another.

We cannot for a moment assume that he intended to run a risk. His teaching and practice showed that in his judgment risks at fleet manœuvres (at any rate in peace-time) were utterly unjustifiable and contrary to all the canons of good seamanship.

A memorandum of his, which has been previously quoted, laid it down as a maxim that risks which might properly be run in time of war were inadmissible in peace-time. We are therefore prohibited from assuming that he was carried away by that fatal spirit of gambling which sometimes impels men to run dangerous risks for the sake of the excitement caused thereby. He never knowingly ran any risks at fleet evolutions, nor did he permit or teach any one under his orders to do so. It is true that the unexpected and untried evolutions which he sometimes ordered occasionally looked dangerous, though it was seen after they had been executed that they were in reality perfectly safe.

Sir George Tryon's frequent discussions on manœuvres, during which he always treated the tactical diameter of his turning circle as 800 yards, show beyond a doubt that he was perfectly well aware of the space necessary to turn in. He was in the habit of storing in his mind not only the space but the exact time, required for carrying out various evolutions.

For example, there was one evolution which he several times performed, with the evident purpose of showing officers the space and the time necessary for turning a certain number of ships. This was to turn 32 points in succession with a squadron of six ships in the usual formation. When the evolution was completed it was seen that the original leader had turned at a perfectly safe distance astern of the rear ship. Or he would turn the leading subdivision of three ships 32 points together, when it would be seen that they completed their turn at a perfectly safe distance astern of the original rear subdivision. Both of these manœuvres looked dangerous, as it always appeared as if the leader would ram one of the rear ships; but they were both perfectly safe, so long as the Admiral remembered the proper number of ships with which they could be performed. Had either of them been attempted with more than six ships in a subdivision they would have been highly dangerous.

Shortly after the loss of the Victoria some criticisms appeared in the public press to the effect that Sir George Tryon was in the habit of working his

squadron by the eye, in a haphazard, irregular sort of manner, and that he did not believe in the exactitude with which modern ships could be manœuvred in ordinary weather and in tideless waters.

It is perfectly true, as pointed out in the last chapter, that his "T A" system of manœuvring was intended to teach officers to work ships in a squadron by the eye, in order to prepare for a time when exact evolutions would be impossible. But, on the other hand, he had the most perfect confidence in the certainty and uniformity with which a well-drilled squadron of modern steamships could be manœuvred. He was in the habit of making the most exact calculations as to time and space for the various evolutions necessary for taking the squadron into, or out of, harbour, and of plotting off the exact point where they ought to begin.

As an instance of his faith in measurement wherever it was possible, he was on one occasion discussing with Captain Wilson of the Sans Pareil the best way of taking a battleship into the port of Iero, in the island of Mitylene: it is a harbour having a very narrow entrance with a sharp turn in it, and they were in the act of entering it in the Surprise, the Admiral's yacht, when Captain Wilson suggested that the proper way to take in a heavy ship would be to come in on the leading mark, and to lay off on the chart the actual turning circle of the ship, and then put the helm over as soon as certain bearings were on. "Of course it

would," replied the Admiral; "you might then put your helm over and go to bed."

Tryon delighted in planning and executing something a little out of the common, something more elaborate than that which would be involved in the usual routine. He said it was excellent practice, and that it gave every one concerned much more interest in the manœuvres.

His exceptional skill as an organiser, which was shown at many periods of his life, was doubtless due to this habit of mind; but it had its dangers, especially when each step and calculation were worked out in his own head, and with no assistance from, or consultation with, others.

It cannot be denied that this self-reliant habit of mind and thought will be essential in any admiral who aspires to excel as a tactician in time of war. It will now—for some years at any rate—be discredited in time of peace. It is one of the dangers which are completely avoided by those who are content to follow in the beaten track.

As an example of Sir George Tryon's originality in devising unusual manœuvres, the following case may be given. The night before the squadron left Beyrout several of the captains were walking back together along the cliffs, and looking down on the ships at anchor in two lines parallel to the shore, when one of the captains remarked, "I wonder how he will take the squadron out to-morrow." One suggested one simple way, and another another, when a third remarked, "I don't know what he

will do, but I am certain it will be nothing so prosaic as either of those." And sure enough the manœuvre when it did come off was entirely different from anything he had done before, and was a good example of his habit of calculating exactly where a particular manœuvre would place the ships. The squadron was in two lines parallel to the shore, the first division being inside, and as soon as the ships were under weigh they were all turned together, as if to steam out in divisions in line abreast, second division in front. The first division was then ordered to proceed on a given course at a speed of 6 knots, in line abreast, passing through the intervals of the second division; and as the first division passed through, the second division was ordered to proceed on another course at a speed of 7½ knots—the speed and course being so calculated as to bring the second division, by a diagonal movement, exactly into line abreast with the first division, when the former was ordered to alter course together to the same course as the latter, and the whole fleet proceeded together in single line abreast.

There was nothing difficult in the manœuvre, though the conception of it was original, and the idea of applying the "mooring-board" in this manner was also original; and it was unusual for the Commander-in-Chief to signal a course and speed to a division which he was not actually leading, instead of leaving it to the leader of the division to do so.

When we remember that this habit of inventing and carrying out new manœuvres had been practised by Sir George Tryon for many years with perfect safety; that he worked out the problems by himself, without assistance from anybody; and that he absolutely discountenanced the running of any risks in peace manœuvres,—it is not surprising that he should have inspired in the minds of his subordinates a complete confidence in his ability, his judgment, and his reliability as a judicious and brilliant tactician. Nor need we marvel that when once a wrong idea as to space had got into his head, he should feel the same perfect confidence as if he had been right; that he should hold to it with characteristic tenacity; and that he should be unwilling to receive hints or listen to remonstrances from those around him. Nor must we unduly blame his subordinates for failing to press beyond a certain point considerations of danger in a manœuvre which they did not feel quite sure they understood.

The object of his last and fatal manœuvre was clear enough when we look at it after the event. It was intended to be a neat and prompt way of reversing the course of the fleet, bringing it on to its anchor bearings, and at the same time and with the one evolution closing the two columns from their cruising distance of six cables to their anchoring distance of two cables; showing also, as Sir George supposed (and as he had shown on many previous occasions), an accurate knowledge of the space the ships would take to turn in.

By what mental process he halved the necessary distance (or perhaps it would be more correct to say, failed to double the distance, when two columns were about to turn towards each other) it is impossible to say—though the most infallible of us must be conscious of having made similar mistakes in mental arithmetic on more than one occasion during our lives, and upon matters concerning which we were really perfectly familiar as to the proper figures relating thereto. But having once got a wrong idea into our minds, there it stuck; and, looking back on our error afterwards, we are utterly unable to account for that which we properly and modestly describe as our "stupid mistake." "Humanum est errare."

In estimating the space required for ships to turn in, there are two circumstances which are apt to act as traps and snares to our memory and our mental arithmetic. One is, that we are in the habit of talking of ships turning circles sometimes by their radius and sometimes by their diameter, the former being practically the half of the latter.[1] The other is, that in treating of distances in squadron manœuvres we sometimes speak and think in cables' lengths and sometimes in units of 100 yards, the one being the double of the other.

Four cables and 800 yards are the same thing.

[1] As a matter of fact, a ship turning on her helm does not describe a circle, but a parabola. It is usual, however, to speak of it as a circle, and for practical purposes, and within certain limits, it is proper to treat it as such.

We know that 800 yards was accepted as the tactical diameter of the squadron, so as to conform to the turning powers of the least handy ships, and thus ensure precision and uniformity in all fleet evolutions; and we also know that if one column only had turned inwards, it would by so doing have brought the distance from six cables to two cables, the latter being the proper and prearranged distance of the columns for the anchoring formation.

In connection with the report of the Director of Naval Construction above alluded to, it was asked, Why should the doors ever be left open at sea?

The reply is, that it is necessary to keep them open, both for the sake of health and ventilation, and also in order to carry on properly the work of the ship.

The subject of water-tight doors is undoubtedly a vexed question, concerning which there are some diverse opinions, as between naval officers and constructors. The question is cleverly dealt with, from a common-sense point of view, by Mr James R. Thursfield, in an article previously referred to, in the 'Naval Annual' for 1894. Mr Thursfield, who writes as a looker-on and a disinterested civilian, though with considerable naval knowledge and experience, says: "But the demonstration that the water-tight doors were in good order, and if closed betimes their closing would have saved the ship, and that there were not more of them than were required by the conditions essential for fighting and working the ship, merely proves after

all that the ship was judiciously designed from a constructor's point of view. 'Your ship shall not sink if you do as I tell you,' says the constructor. 'But I cannot work and fight the ship if I do as you tell me,' replies the executive officer; and here the antinomy seems to be complete. The doors are obviously meant to be sometimes open, or they would not be there at all. What security is there that the conditions essential for working and fighting the ship may not require them to be open at the moment when a collision becomes imminent, either through accident in time of peace or through the attack of an enemy in time of war?"

The answer is, "None." It is a risk which must be accepted, amongst many others. The ship has yet to be built which is so effectually divided into water-tight compartments, without doors in them, that she is practically unsinkable by ram or torpedo, and is yet capable of being worked in time of peace, and fought in time of war, by any ship's company which has yet manned an ironclad.

The loss of the Victoria brought to light many points of deep interest to this maritime nation. It demonstrated once more the irresistible power of the ram; though in so doing it by no means helped to show that the ram is a practical weapon of offence in ships of high speed, or that the difference between ramming and being rammed is anything more than a mere matter of chance as between ships of equal speed and turning powers. And it demonstrated further, that a well-drilled and well-

disciplined ship's company, thoroughly under control in broad daylight, and in fine weather, were unable to save from foundering a modern battleship minutely divided into compartments, which had been rammed at a speed of no more than 5 or 6 knots, far forward, not in her engine or boiler rooms—in fact, at a spot which, without the practical demonstration of the Victoria, would certainly not have been considered a vital spot.

These were the principal physical points brought to light by the Victoria disaster; but the moral points were at least of equal interest and significance.

First, we have as one of the very causes of the disaster a splendid devotion to, and faith in, a chief who had established a position of unquestioned eminence in his profession: not by any ephemeral and possibly fortuitous success in actual war—a reputation which is usually so attractive to both soldiers and sailors—but by a steady and earnest devotion during the whole of his career to the best interests of the service that he loved so well. By study, by zeal, by energy, by hard work and self-denial, Sir George Tryon had made himself a master of his profession, and his great abilities, his wide knowledge, his firmness and impartiality, and his benevolence and kindness of heart, had gained not only the respect and admiration, but the affectionate regard, of all those who served under him.

He had had a remarkably successful, indeed a brilliant, career—so far as brilliancy is possible in times of peace: he made one mistake, and he was

called upon promptly to pay the penalty with his life.

The deep, sincere, heartfelt sorrow of the whole naval service at his loss is the best indication of the estimation in which he was held, and the highest tribute to his worth.

Another bright spot which helped to alleviate the national sorrow caused by the loss of the Victoria was the irreproachable conduct of the crew. Loss of life may be bad, but loss of honour is infinitely worse. In this case there was no loss of honour: on the contrary, the national honour was worthily upheld.

The wreck of the Birkenhead was at the time looked upon as a national disaster. But was it really so? The story of those soldiers who put the women and children into the boats, and then stood in their ranks without flinching while the ship sank beneath them, and they knew that the waters around them were infested with sharks, has been the pride and glory of the British army for the last fifty years; and has without doubt inspired others who wear the same uniform and acknowledge the same code of honour to many a noble deed of self-sacrifice and devotion to military duty.

Such losses of life can scarcely be regarded as national calamities when they bring to light these sterling qualities of calm courage and self-control. The spirit thus shown must be of more value to the country than many battalions and many battleships.

The conduct of the crew of the Victoria—and more especially that of the engineers and stokers —is worthy to be ranked beside that of the soldiers of Birkenhead renown. Of such deeds their country may feel at least as proud as of the more attractive display of impulsive valour which both soldiers and sailors have so often exhibited in actual conflict with the enemy.

The bones of these sailors and their gallant chief rest peacefully in and around the wreck of the ship that they stood by till the last, beneath the deep blue waters of that classic Eastern sea,—at least as hallowed a sepulchre as any plot of mouldering clay, —and their spirits have returned to God who gave them.

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